The Fifth Commandment:

A Comprehensive Exploring the Enduring Significance of Filial Piety in Biblical, Cultural, Historical, and Contemporary Contexts

By

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The Fifth Commandment:

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to Rev. Abraham Park, my spiritual father, who led me to Jesus, and Ok-Phil Kim and Sun-Yong Cho, my physical parents who brought me into this beautiful world.

Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

(Deuteronomy 5:16)

Acknowledgment

I first and foremost give all the glory to the Father God who has granted wisdom and held me every step of the way until the completion of this dissertation. I express my gratitude to the members of Gerizim Hope Presbyterian Church who prayed, encouraged, and supported me along the way. Additionally, I extend my heartfelt thanks to friends, relatives, and professors who have been a source of encouragement and support throughout this journey.

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Abstract

This dissertation aims to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of filial piety and its importance, offering insights into biblical, cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts. We will explore the enduring significance of the Fifth Commandment in contemporary contexts, examining its manifestations among Korean immigrants in the United States as well as the concepts in ancient Korea, Israel, and the surrounding nations of the ANE. Biblical filial piety, as understood in the commandment to honor one's father and mother, extends beyond a mere moral duty. It serves as a foundational value with far-reaching implications for individual moral development and societal ethics. From a theological perspective, the practice of filial piety is deeply intertwined with the divine order, reflecting the nature of God as the ultimate father worthy of honor and obedience. This commandment operates as a guiding principle, fostering relationships and upholding ethical values that resonate across generations.

Chapter One will introduce methodologies, define key terms, and outline motivations for the study.

Chapter Two will compare the practices of honoring parents in Israel and the ANE. We shall see that in Israel, filial piety extended beyond moral obligation. It fostered familial harmony and reflected the divine nature, as opposed to the surrounding ANE nations.

Chapter Three will delve into the history of Korean filial piety which was rooted in Confucianism. We shall explore the evolution of filial piety in Korea and its integration into religious beliefs.

Chapter Four will examine how Korean immigrants perceive and practice filial piety that was steeped in a collectivist culture but must be practiced in the individualistic West. In addition, it will deal with the role of the church in bridging the cultural gap between East and West, through passing down values, and unchanging, timeless biblical teachings to subsequent generations.

Chapter Five will present the results of a survey and interviews conducted in a Korean-American church. We shall highlight motivations for filial piety as well as the concepts of Reciprocal Filial Piety (RFP) and Authoritative Filial Piety (AFP) in DFPM.

Chapter Six will summarize our conclusions, contributions, areas for further study, and implications for the church. This study underscores the dynamic nature of filial piety across cultures and the pivotal role of the church in shaping and preserving these values in an ever-changing world.

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Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABE	Anchor Bible Commentary
AD	in the year of the Lord
ANE	Ancient Near East
ASV	American Standard Version
BCE	Before the Christian Era
Ch(s.)	Chapters(s)
e.g.,	for example
EBDBHEL	Enhanced Brwon-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon (1977)
ed	edited, edition, editor
ESV	English Standard Version
fn	footnote
GHP Church	Gerizim Hope Presbyterian Church
HB	Hebrew Bible
i.e.	id est, that is
Ibid.	in the same source
IVPBBCOT	InterVarsity Press Biblical Background Commentary of the Old Testament (1997)

JANES	Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Society
JETS	Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society
JPS	Jewish Publication Society
JPSTC	Jewish Publication Society Torah Commentary
JSOT	Journal of the Study of the Old Testament
KJV	King James Version
LXX	Septuagint
MCEDONTW	Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words
NASB (1995)	New American Standard Bible (1995)
NCEA	National Center on Elder Abuse.
NICOT	New International Commentary of the Old Testament
NIDOTTE	New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis (1997)
NIEBF	Nelson's Illustrated Encyclopedia of Bible Facts (1995)
NIVE	New International Version
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
p(p.)	page(s)
TCB	Theological Commentary on the Bible

TDOT	Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (1995)
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the NEW Testament (1985)
TNIV	Today's International Version
trans.	Translated. Translation
US	United States
v(v.)	verse(s)
vol.	volume
WBC	World Biblical Commentary
ZEB	Zondervan Encyclopedia of the Bible (2009)
ZIBBC	Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (2019)
ZPEB	Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible. 5 vols (1975)

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Problem

Umberto Cassuto emphasizes that the Torah's purpose is to prepare its readers for the giving of the Decalogue.[1] At the heart of the Decalogue, bridging the first four commandments which concern the relationship of His people with God, and the last five which refer to the relationship between the people of God, stands the fifth commandment. The honor and obedience ascribed to the Heavenly Father is to be reflected in the relationship with one's earthly parents, and from there overflow into all relationships. The fifth commandment instructs us to honor our father and mother… "so that *you may live long* and that *it may go well with you* in the land the LORD your God is giving you" (Deut. 5:16 TNIV).[2] But is it still necessary to do so in the twenty-first century? The post-modern Western culture, with its focus on individualism, and youth has combined with a generalized view of the elderly as irrelevant, and even burdensome that has increasingly blurred the practice of honoring parents and what that should look like today. This study will argue that it remains an important biblical precept – so much so that the increasing lack of care and regard for one's parents has threatened the very moral fiber of society.

Our proposal is based on the belief that the Bible, as we have it, is the account of the God of the universe, breaking into history in order to reveal Himself and His precepts. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness (2 Tim 3:16). In light of this teaching, biblical references to honoring one's parents should have

[1] Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus*, (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1983), 235.
[2] The Bible version will vary according to the context.

normative value for believers in all times and places.[3] The same God who was with the Israelites is still with us today, and although the practice honoring parents or filial piety may differ with the changing of time and place, it remains as relevant and important as it was on Mt. Sinai.

Despite its significant value, the lack of honoring parents by younger generations is increasing in contemporary cultures. The internet has allowed for unfiltered information to reach our children in a way parents have never before experienced. Children are bombarded with information for which they are ill-equipped to process without parental guidelines. The practice of the fifth commandment, within a healthy reciprocal parent-child relationship, enhances the possibilities for teachable moments during which ethical values may be instilled and reinforced throughout life.

The practice of honoring parents instills a child with a "moral compass."[4] For this reason, the Jewish tradition considers the fifth commandment as the heart of the Ten Commandments;[5] for such biblical teaching encourages the responsibility to honor those who have guided and cared for us as we have grown into adulthood.[6] Parents are partners with the Creator in bringing us into the world. Consequently, children have a duty to honor them just as they honor the Creator.[7] Like a human backbone, the fifth commandment itself keeps the balance of the deity

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[3] Moises Silva, *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation Six Volumes in One* (Grand Rapides: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 87.

[4] Mona Dekoven Fishbane, *Honor your father and your mother: Intergenerational values and Jewish tradition,* in Froma Walsh (ed.), *Spiritual resources in family therapy,* 2nd ed. (New York: Guilford Press, 2008), 174. Its importance is highlighted by its placement in the order of the Decalogue. The fifth commandment shows how important family relationships are to God in the Decalogue. The first four statements of the Decalogue concern issues relating to the deity whereas the last six commandments focus on relationships among human beings. The fifth commandment plays a significant role as a link connecting the first vertical relationships with God and the second half horizontal relationships among human beings.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Deanna A. Thompson, *Deuteronomy: A Theological Commentary on the Bible,* Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, 2014. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, https://ebookcentral-proquest com.dtl.idm.oclc.org/lib/dtl/detail.action? doc ID=5974228.

[7] Cassuto, *Commentary on the Book of Exodu*s, 246. He adds: "on this basis it is possible to understand the reason for the reward promised in connection with his precept: *that your days may be long in the land which the*

and humanity at the center of the Decalogue. Thus, this commandment becomes the foundation for the five following commandments that all have to do with horizontal relationships.[8]

Biblical filial piety learned in childhood then becomes a blueprint for all future relationships for living in a community. Childs notes that whatever broader implications the commandments may have, their primary function is directed toward shaping the life of His chosen community.[9] If each individual obeys God's law, he or she will live in the fullest state of God's blessing. The result of obedience may extend to all other positions of authority and submission. As such, it is of vital importance that children learn the practice of honoring their parents at home, for it is in this early and ongoing instruction that the foundation for future relationships and the ability to successfully respond to authority is laid. Ezekiel 22:6-12 lists several sins committed by Judah that led to their judgment and downfall.[10] Through these lists, we see that contempt for parents resulted in the breakdown of relationships and moral decay.

1.2 Statement of the Problem for Implication of the Fifth Commandment

Lord your God is giving you. The reward is determined on the principle of measure for measure: if your will be vouchsafed long life upon earth."

[8] As such, if a person truly honors one's parents, he or she would not commit murder, would not commit adultery, would not steal, would not witness falsely, and would not covet. A child who honors his or her parent will not dishonor them by breaking the relational commandments.

[9] Brevard S. Childs, *The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary,* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1974), 438.

[10] See how each of the princes of Israel who are in you [Jerusalem] uses his power to shed blood. "*In you they have treated father and mother with contempt*; in you they have oppressed the foreigner and mistreated the fatherless and the widow. You have despised my holy things and desecrated my Sabbaths. In you are slanderers who are bent on shedding blood; in you are those who eat at the mountain shrines and commit lewd acts. In you are those who dishonor their father's bed; in you are those who violate women during their period, when they are ceremonially unclean. In you one man commits a detestable offense with his neighbor's wife, another shamefully defiles his daughter-in-law, and another violates his sister, his own father's daughter. In you are people who accept bribes to shed blood; you take interest and make a profit from the poor. You extort unjust gain from your neighbors. And you have forgotten me, declares the Sovereign Lord" (NIV).

Korea, largely influenced by the positive side of Confucianism, has long been regarded as the "Country of Courteous People in the East."[11] Parental instruction has stressed the importance of serving the elderly. As a result, children developed a mindset that included the sincere care of their aging parents. Serving one's elderly parents was the duty and moral obligation of the children and was considered one of the most valuable ethical teachings. Boye Mente considers one of the most important cultural factors for Koreans is "paying deferential honor to superiors." He writes:

> Koreans were literally programmed from childhood to treat those above them with extraordinary deference at all times. Deferential respect for parents, especially fathers, for the male sex in general, for senior members of the family, for elders in general, for government authorities, and for spirits and the gods was a prime directive in the culture and resulted in *jonjung* (which means honor in Korean) becoming a key element in the foundation of the social system…Koreans are still distinguished by their respect for their parents and family, for their seniors and elders, for scholars, for discipline, for form and formalities, for education, and so on.[12]

Showing respect toward the elderly was highly regarded.[13] A young Korean person would not sit down before all of the elders present had taken their seats. Unfortunately, however, in Korean society, some children have chosen to abandon their elderly parents by putting them in front of someone's house or in a nursing home.[14] Sung and Kim note the following reasons for the growing trend toward mistreatment of elders:

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[11] Yushin Yoo, *Korea: Treasures of the Hermit Kingdom*, (L.A.: The Golden Pond Press, 1988), 74.

[12] Boye Lafayette De Mente, *The Korean Mind: Understanding Contemporary Korean Culture* (Hon Kong: Tuttle Publishing, 2017), 157.

[13] James Hoare, *Korea: The Essential Guide to Customs and Culture* (London: Kuperard, 2021), 48. Another respectful behavior is the customs of Korean young people not to eat, drink alcohol, or smoke in front of parents or teachers. Instruction related to filial piety has resulted in many honorable actions by sons and daughters that stem from their sincere dedication, coming from the genuine outflow of gratitude for their elderly parents.

[14] Mikyng Jang, *Perspectives on Elder Abuse in Korea*, *Journal of Comparative Family Studies (*Winter 2009), 48. This study examined by the Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs collected data from 865 elders over age 65 in 2001. Types of abuse were verbal and psychological (7.7% of respondents), neglect (2.5%), economic exploitation (2.1%), physical abuse (0.3%), and other abuse. Almost 43% of the elder abuse occurred,

> In Korea, more elderly people are living longer, and fewer children are being born. Consequently, elder care responsibilities are placed on the shoulders of fewer younger people. Along with these shifts, Koreans are undergoing social changes, including a movement toward smaller families, growth in the number of children living a distance from their aging parents, and the emerging tendency among the young to have individualistic lifestyles. Heavy burdens of providing elder care combined with these social changes might tempt some of the young to unravel the traditional values affirming elder respect.[15]

In response**,** the Korean government legislated and implemented the Act on the Promotion and Support of Filial Piety (Act No. 8610) on August 4, 2008.[16]

The phenomenon of dishonoring parents has also infiltrated the Korean community in the United States. Lee has noted that the disrespectful treatment of parents lies in the different cultural concepts and environments between Korean immigrant parents and their children who have grown up in the mainstream Western culture.[17] According to Lee, conflict arises between generations when the children do not conform to the Confucian values concerning filial piety of their parents. They expect unquestioned obedience from their children, which may often conflict

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"almost every day." Also, in 2016, a similar investigation of the study done by Chang M. regarding mistreatment of Korean older immigrants in the U.S and older Koreans in Korea. Out of 240 Korean elders living in the U.S, approximately one fourth (26.3%) experienced elder abuse while out of 240 Koreans in Korea, 23.3% had experienced elder abuse in *Experience of elder abuse among older Korean immigrants. Journal of Elder Abuse & Neglect*, 28(2): 76–94. 2016 Doi: 10.1080/08946566.2016.1156593. In 2019, another study of Chang M. figured out that out of 200 elders in the US, over half (58%) experienced one or more types of elder abuse above mentioned in *Comparative Study on Subjective Experience of Elder Abuse Between Older Korean Immigrants in the United States and Older Koreans in Korea*. The International Journal of Aging and Human Development 88(2): 187–210. 2019 Doi: 10.1177/0091415018759750.

[15] Kyu-Taik Sung and Han Sung Kim, *Elder respect among Young Adults; Exploration of behavioral Forms in Korea, Ageing International*, 28/3 (summer 2003), 280.

[16] Si Woo Kim, *A Study of a Paradigm of Modern Hyo: Focused on Biblical HYO*, The Korean HYO Studies Association, Journal of Korean Hyo Studies 2. The purpose of this Act on the Promotion and Support of Filial Piety (Act No. 8610) is to contribute to resolving the critical issue of dishonoring elders, facing today, and encouraging supportably filial piety, which is a traditional cultural heritage at the national level. https://www.law.go.kr (Translation from Korean to English is mine).

[17] See the Doctoral Dissertation, Yoon Sun Lee, *Korean Child-Rearing Practices in the United States: An Ethnographic Study of Korean Immigrants in the Cultural Transition*, The University of San Francisco, 1999, 49-50.

with the Western ideals, characterized by independence and individualism, that have influenced their children.[18]

1.3 Motivation for Inquiry

This study is rooted in a deep, personal experience involving the practice of honoring parents. I have often reflected on and regretted my own neglect and disrespect of my parents in the past. Acting out of ignorance and lack of self-control, I disrespected and hurt my parents with my words and deeds. Although I know I am forgiven, I must live with the knowledge that I often broke the fifth commandment and my parent's hearts. As I have grown in my faith and repented of my failures, the Lord has impressed upon me a desire to encourage young people to follow a different path from mine in their relationships with their parents. I have shared my shameful story with my two adult boys, who treat me and my husband well. I hope they practice the fifth commandment not merely to please us but to please God as His children. I cannot change the past, but perhaps I can spare others from experiencing the same regrets by sharing my story and the significance of obeying the fifth commandment through the practice of biblical filial piety.

I will argue that biblical filial piety consists of two facets: Body and mind, and spiritual care. The first or basic level, that of body and soul includes sincere care for one's parents in the realm of physical provision, emotional comfort, kind and encouraging language, and financial support. The spiritual area consists of discipleship of the soul of the parents with the gospel and prayer. By respectfully providing Christlike care to an unsaved parent, their hearts and minds may be open to the gospel of life.

[18] Ibid., Hierarchical parent-child relationship, low level of communication style due to parents' language barrier, parental desire for strong control, and pressure for academic success over the American individualistic culture.

1.3.1 Dishonoring My Mother

My personal stories of dealings with my parents are filled with regret and remorse. My mother and I did not spend much time together during my teen years. She worked long hours outside of the home, and I was not able to share my thoughts and issues with her. After my marriage, I did not see her very often. My elder brother cared for her, while I contributed from afar financially. This alone was not proper filial piety toward my mother. In 2007, I immigrated to the United States with my family; I did not have the opportunity to visit her in Korea until just before she passed away. In fact, eleven years passed before I saw Mom's face again. She was in the ICU due to complications of diabetes. Sadly, six days later she breathed her last breath and went to heaven at the age of 76.

While Mom was alive, whenever she called me, she often expressed her desire for my presence, saying, "I miss you so much and when do you have time to visit Korea? I dearly want to see you." I would answer lightly that my business far outweighed her missing of me. My casual dismissal of her feelings stemmed from my lack of concern and respect although I loved her deeply.

After my mother's death, I felt deeply remorseful that I did not take care of her with a sincere heart physically, emotionally, or verbally. To be honest, I did not take her words and concerns seriously. During her funeral process period, I kept weeping and mourning. I was full of regret as I recalled my bad treatment of her**.** God's word in Proverbs 30:17 speaks metaphorically to the spiritual blindness that resulted from dishonoring parents. I was blinded to the fact that the fifth commandment included providing emotional, physical, and spiritual support to my mom**.** I recalled how I spoke harshly to her when I was a teenager even though I was a Christian. I did not realize those attitudes were bad. I am happy to say that in the ICU, during the final moment

of her life, I was able to confess my wrongdoings, faults, and mistreatment of her. I wish I had listened to her words and respected her with a loving and honorable response.

1.3.2 Dishonoring My Father

I will always regret that I did not share the Gospel with my father. He worked very diligently to support our family. He sincerely loved and cared for those around him. Our neighbors frequently complimented him. But unfortunately, he was an atheist. My faith was immature when I was a teenager, and it was at this time he took his own life. The most distressing thing for me was that my dad regretted his act of suicide and begged for his life to be spared. On the way to the emergency room, my dad whispered to my elder brother, "My son, please save me… Please save me." I often wonder if I had shared the Word of God with my dad, would he have killed himself? However, my dad's words, "Please save me" would not have gone unheard by the ears of the living God who does not want anyone to perish (2 Pet. 3:9).

His death caused me to search intensely for God's presence. As my own faith matured, I realized how important the task of sharing and teaching the gospel was. After the death of my father, I shared my belief in the Lord Jesus with my mother who had practiced Buddhism entire her life. I began to tearfully pray for her salvation and speak to her about the Gospel. Within two years, by the grace of God, her eyes and heart were opened, and she accepted Jesus Christ, as Savior and Lord.

Even though I fell short in following the fifth commandment well and honoring my parents, God was able to work things together for good. He took the tragic death of my father and used it to transform the life of my mother. It is my desire that God will continue to use my

failings in order to help young adults to understand the importance of biblical filial piety and encourage them to practice it faithfully.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to analyze the texts regarding honoring parents and honoring God with a view to understanding and practicing biblical filial piety within a Korean-American community, specifically to adult children in GHP (Gerizim Hope Presbyterian) Church, that is satisfactory to those born in Korea and each generation raised in the individualistic culture of the West.

1.5 Literature Review

T*he Korean Mind* (2017) written by Boye De Mente provides an insight into Korean culture and the personality of the Koran people. According to him, "Contemporary Korean scholars and observers including a developmental psychologist have noted a variety of surface changes in the attitudes and behavior of Koreans since the end of the nineteenth century, but they say that the national character of Koreans has remained essentially the same" (preface). He points out that one of the keys to understanding traditional Korean attitudes and behavior is the language of the people. Key words provide access to the Korean mind - to core concepts and emotions and the attitudes and feelings that make up the Korean psyche. The key terms reveal both the heart and soul of Koreans and provide bridges for communicating and interacting with Koreans on the most basic level.

One of the key words that De Mente explored is the traditional concept of *hyo* (filial piety). This "*hyo*" underscores a profound sense of duty and reciprocity towards parents and ancestors, reinforcing the importance of maintaining family unity and honoring parents within

Korean culture. *Hyo* was the core of the kinship community for centuries; independence and autonomy of the individual were simply not recognized. Children were seen as physical and mental extensions of their parents in a concrete sense, and children considered caring for their parents in return. Filial piety continues to be an important aspect of Korean society; the family comes before the individual (110). This implies that cultural traditions play a significant role in shaping familial relationships and societal norms.

In his work, *The Eternal Covenant for All Generations* (2012), Abraham Park posits that the efficacy of the fifth commandment is significant for today. He argues the Sinaitic Covenant although it was made between Israel who had just come out of Egypt and YHWH, is also relevant to the next generation who are alive after forty years in the wilderness (Deut. 5:2-3) (59). In regard to Deuteronomy 29:14-15, he notes that the audience of this commandment extends to those who were not present on the plain of Moab. As such, the recipients who are to observe this commandment are infinitely expanded beyond time and space with the expression of the words 'those who are not with us here today.' The Decalogue then extends to modern Christians who believe in Jesus Christ and practice His words in their lives. Park states: "The tense of God's commandment is the *present,* the place of the covenant is *here,* and the observer of the commandment is *us* who are living by the faith of the living in the twenty-first century" (61). In other words, the fulfillment of those commandments and their stipulation is for the *present* in the LORD GOD.[19] Park emphasizes that the validity of commandments and covenants is not confined to the Mosaic era but is applicable to people living in the 21st century as well. His perspective demonstrates the transcendent nature of ethical principles and suggests that

[19] Translation from Korean to English is mine.

moral teachings are not bound by historical periods but remain pertinent in contemporary times. They continue to offer guidance and moral foundations for present-day Christians.

Jack Balswick, Pamela King, and Kevin Reimer in *The Reciprocating Self* (2005) observe human development at each life stage in both psychological and biblical aspects through the lens of the reciprocating self. Balswick *et al* argue that "The biblical depiction of God's relationship to human beings is used as a model for how God desires human beings to be in relationship with each other. We argue that a reciprocating self can develop best in a relational context that is characterized by unconditional love commitment, gracing, empowering, and intimacy" (28). As we shall see, this is a key concept in the successful practice of filial piety. A reciprocating love between parents and children may enhance their spiritual formation. As children are loved, instructed, experience healthy communication, and nurtured by parents, they are presented with the opportunity to learn how to express love to their parents, others, and God. Honoring parents, the reciprocal relationship should be foundational based on trust, love, and mutual communication. Their insights highlight the vital role of parental love, nurturing, and mutual communication in shaping how children learn to honor their parents and develop a deeper understanding of reciprocal relationships with others and with God.

"The Care of the Elderly in the Ancient Near East" by M. Stole and S. Vleeming surveys the history and culture of the Ancient Near East, primarily the legal perspectives of the care of the elderly in ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt. According to Claus Wilcke, "Elderly people were highly respected in Ancient Near Eastern societies" (24). Parents had the power to disinherit children if they did not care for them in their old age.[20]

[20] Charlie Trimm, *Honor your Parents: A command for Adults*, JETS 60/2 (2017): 247-63, 251. However, Andrea Mcdowell in her article "Legal Aspects of Care of the Elderly in Egypt" disputes that children who

The Egyptians' honoring of parents involved caring for them after they died. This book offers a comprehensive view of how Ancient Near Eastern cultures regarded and legislated the care of the elderly. It provides valuable insights into the social norms, legal structures, and the moral and cultural significance attached to filial responsibilities toward the elderly in these societies.

In summary, the literature review is significant for our study in that God's ethical truths apply to us today. In addition, children learn best how to honor their parents and God in the proper attitude and manner through loving reciprocal relationships. Finally, an understanding of the biblical and other ANE cultures' practice of filial piety offers a deeper understanding of its importance and how it may be lived out today.

1.6 Methodology and Chapter Sequence

Our methodology will include a close reading and exegesis of several OT texts concerning the honoring of parents. In the first recitation of the Decalogue in Exod. 20:12, honoring one's parents is presented as being necessary "so that your days may be prolonged on the land which the LORD your God gives you" (NASB). The second presentation in Deut. 5:16 adds two further additions to the commandment; "just as the LORD commanded" and "that it may go well with you." These elements are reflected in Prov 1:8-9 and 4:10 which highlight the positive aspects of parental honoring. Eph. 6:1-3 states: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a *promise,* so that it may turn out well for you, and that you may live long on the earth" (NASB).

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supported their parents were rewarded and bad children were punished by means of withholding their inheritance in Egypt (217).

Exod. 21:15, Lev 20: 9, Prov. 20:20 all carry the penalty of death for those who break this commandment. As such, honoring one's parents is paramount to successful living, and at the same time, dishonoring them carries extremely dire consequences. In order to understand these texts, we will survey socio-cultural and historical data both in Israel and the surrounding nations in regard to the parent-child relationship and its significance for everyday life and survival in the ANE.

We will be looking at these texts theologically. This study understands the Bible as a theological document that presents itself as the Word of God. Therefore, we will interpret the contextual data through a theological lens in order to answer such questions as: "What did honor of parents entail in the world of the OT? How did they demonstrate honor? What was considered dishonorable behavior? What is the meaning of the promises attached to following the practice of parental honoring? Why did neglect of this commandment cause the death penalty?"

In addition, based upon the biblical principles discussed above along with a methodology of participant observation,[21] we shall conduct paper-based surveys and in-depth interviews with Gerizim Hope Presbyterian Church members for two weeks. Questionnaires will include demographics such as age, gender, place of birth, length of residence in the U.S., their beliefs of individualistic and collectivistic values about filial piety, and their perception and attitude toward caring for elderly parents. In order to delve deeper into the perceptions of filial motivation, in-depth interviews will be conducted in English with one person from each age group.

[21] The researcher takes on a role in the situation or context featured in the case study. See, Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion, and Keith Morrison, *Research Methos in Education*, (New York: Routledge, 2018), 387, also see, Bill Gillham, *Case Study Research Methods*, (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2000), 21.

Chapter Two will delve into an exegetical analysis of OT and NT passages concerning honoring parents. We shall define various terms, present the study's purpose and motivation, and explore the contextual value and significance of the subject. A comparative examination of parental treatment in the ANE and Israel will be conducted, shedding light on potential insights into God's expectations for His people. Additionally, the chapter will briefly highlight instances of biblical filial piety, showing the actions of dutiful children as well as the failures of wayward ones.

Chapter Three will explore traditional practices of Korean filial piety. We will explore the foundational ideology of *HongIk-InGan*, particularly its connection to filial piety. We will explore the concept of Korean filial piety and its intimate correlation with the act of honoring heaven. Additionally, we will investigate the impact of each state religion in Korea on the observance of filial piety.

Chapter Four will investigate the perception and practice of filial piety among Korean-American adult children in the U.S. This exploration will cover the history of Korean immigration and the challenges faced by Korean-American families in America, particularly those affecting their familial relationships. The cultural disparities between Korean traditions and the prevailing U.S. culture will also be dealt with as well as the complex dynamics in family relationships. We shall examine the role of Korean institutions like language schools and churches in imparting traditional Korean values, including filial piety and faith. We shall see that the role of churches is central to the community, playing a pivotal role in preserving cultural values, including filial piety and personal faith growth.

Chapter Five will present the data from our survey that investigates how Korean-American adults in the GHP Church perceive and practice filial piety in their immigrant society.

In-depth interviews will be performed as well. We shall see how the past cultural norms and motivations concerning honoring parents in traditional Korea and that of Korean American youth differ in the individualistic society in the U. S in order to understand any shift in filial piety practices today.

Chapter Six will include a brief summary of our work, areas for further study, and implications for the church.

1.7 Key Terms

In order to appreciate and approach the text to discover a theology of biblical filial piety, we will clarify certain terms. The Western understanding of certain words or concepts may be nuanced differently in Korean culture as well as in the Bible itself. Thus, some terms and foundational concepts that contribute to our methodology need to be summarized.

1.7.1 Biblical Filial Piety (Honor)

David deSilva notes: "Honor is a dynamic and relational concept as the mark of a valuable person."[22] He suggests that honor is the esteem in which a person is held by the group that he or she regards as significant. It is the recognition that one is considered a valuable member of that group and implies that he or she is respected by them.

The Bible contains a variety of circumstances in which honor may be attributed or bestowed. It is frequently used to refer to the attitude of God's people toward God (Prov. 3:9; Isa

[22] David A. deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture,* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic), 2000, 23. Also, in the Old Testament, the word, כבד (*kabed*) in Hebrew, "liver" is derived from the root *kbd*, which means "heaviness," in the physical sense as well as "gravity" and "importance" in the most important bodily organ. Several passages use the piel of *kbd* to mean "make someone heavy, consider someone important" in the sense of the acceptance, respect, or recognition accorded people with a certain social or political status.

43:23) and others. Honor should be offered first to God (1 Sam. 2:30) as shown in the first four commandments in the Decalogue, followed by honor to parents (Exod. 20:12; Deut. 5:16, Eph. 6:1-2). Honor is to be shown toward wives and husbands (1 Pet. 3:7; Eph. 5:33), the elderly (Lev. 19:32), those in authority (1 Pet. 2:18), government officials (Rom. 13:1-2, 13:7), others (Rom. 12:10), and so on. Through this, we realize that as we have a proper attitude and heart of honor toward God first, we shall behave faithfully to others horizontally as well. As such, the proper attitude of honor toward God first should overflow into our horizontal relationships.

Honoring parents is not unique to Judaism and Christianity. Elder care and filial piety are also found in Islam, the Asian religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, and especially Confucianism.[23] Within the family structure, the word, 'honor' expresses recognition of parental authority based on the proper attitude toward God [24] (Ex. 20:12; Deu 5:16; Mal 1:6).

In this study, 'practicing biblical filial piety' includes emotional, physical, verbal, and spiritual aspects. To honor one's parents includes:

1) Treating them with the same dignity accorded to an important person
2) Offering kind, positive, and encouraging words
3) Obeying his/her words or instructions
4) Willingly supporting them financially

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[23] Guang Zing, *Filial Piety in Early Buddhism*, 12 Journal of Buddhist Ethics I (2005), 82.
The differences between the biblical filial piety and that of other religions is the object to be honored. Biblical filial piety is to know and serve God through practicing honoring parents. But the figure to be honored in Confucian filial piety, deeply rooted in Koreans, is a king, a teacher, and a father. These three types of figures are one in their significance. They are seen as influential ones to make a solid home, society, and a nation. However, God is excluded in there. Through the biblical teaching, people can live a meaningful and right life as God intended. Ultimately, the practice of filial piety on this earth is to serve God well, uphold His will, and obey His Word.

[24] G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 7, trans. David. E. Green, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), 23. In the OT, the Hebrew word, כבד) *kabed*) "liver" is derived from the root *kbd*, which means "heaviness," in the physical sense as well as "gravity" and "importance" in the spiritual sense, "honor" and "respect."

5) Sharing the gospel and evangelizing him/her as a Christian

1.7.2 Father

The ultimate authority in the Israelite family was the father.[25] The father in the Bible disciplines his children with love (Gen. 37:10; 44:20; 50:16-17, Prov.1:8; 6:20; Heb. 12:5-8) and blesses them (Gen. 27:10). He deeply understands, loves, and forgives wayward children (Gen. 26:34-35, 2 Sam. 13:37, 39; 19:4; Luke 15:20). These are characteristics of God as Father who created and gave life to all humanity (Gen 1:26-28; Gen 2:7). God called Israel, "my firstborn son," and as such acted as their father when he redeemed them from the bondage of Egypt at the Exodus (Exod. 4:22).

God the Father is not only a provider of life but also a redeemer for His people (Isa. 63:16). Jesus called God His Father and taught His followers to call Him, *Abba*, Father. (Mark 14:36). Paul wrote that we who are adopted through Jesus Christ can call God Father, *Abba* (Gal 4:6; Rom 8:15). The term father in Korean is *Abba* (daddy) or *Aboji* (father) as well. In the traditional Korean family, the authority of the father was greater than that of the mother.[26] However, now they share almost equal authority.

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[25] Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel: Library of Ancient Israel*, (Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 36. The term 'father' could also pertain to a man of authority in the family. Father is not only a physical father but also an authority in general. According to Deuteronomy 32:7 relates father to elderly people, who are leaders. It says, "Remember the days of old, Consider the years of all generations. Ask your father and he will inform you, your elders, and they will tell you" (NASB). The Westminster Larger Catechism states, "By 'father' and 'mother' in the fifth commandment, are meant not only natural parents, but all superiors in age and gifts. Patrick D Miller: Deuteronomy, (Kentucky: Westminster John Knox, 2012), 85. Martin Luther also claims that all who in their government perform the functions of a father are all called fathers in the Scriptures in his work, *The Large Catechism*, translated by F. Bente and W. H. T. Dau, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), 565-773. This is because all authority flows and is propagated from the authority of parents especially, the father.

[26] Kwankyu Lee, *Hankook Gajokui Sa-Whae Ilyuhak* (Social Anthropology of the Koran Family) (Seoul: Jipmoondang Publishing Co., 1998). 52; Eun-sook Park, Eun-Gyeong Kim, Jeong-wan Won, Wonok Oh, Minhyeon Seok, and Yeojin Lim, *Parent-Child Relations in Traditional Korean Society Seen through the Classical Literature,* Journal of Child Nursing, 2002; 8(4): 469-81, 469.

1.7.3 Mother

While the ultimate authority of the Israelite family was the father or senior male of the household,[27] the mother or senior wife played a primary role in making important family decisions such as those involved in marriage customs.[28] Rebekah discussed with Isaac about getting a wife for Jacob in Gen 27:46. Women had significant power in agriculturally-based village homes due to their important economic contributions to the household (Prov. 31:10-29).[29] The care, discipline, and training of young children were the responsibility of the mother.

Childbearing conferred status on women, especially in times when the need to produce more children was critical, owing to war, famine, disease, and epidemics.[30] Besides raising children, women were responsible for providing food and clothing, cooking, baking bread, and weaving, drawing the water for the needs of both the household and the livestock (Gen. 24:11), working in the fields (Ruth 2:21-23), tending flocks (Gen 29:9), even mourning for the dead (Jer. 9:17) and so on.[31]

In addition, the education of children was largely the responsibility of women (1 Sam 1:22-28; Prov. 3:1) even though both parents provided instruction to young children (Prov. 1:8).[32] Proverbs 6:20 states, "My son, comply with the commandment of your father. And do not ignore the teaching of your mother" (NASB). As such, parental education included instruction in all of the essential activities that children would need to learn to live in the land during their lifetimes.

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[27] King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 36.

[28] Jennie R. Ebeling, *Women's Lives in Biblical Times*, (Bloomsbury Academic &Professional, 2010), 28.

[29] Ibid. Also, King and Stager, Life in Biblical Israel describes women's contributions outside the household and their roles in the household, especially their economic role.

[30] King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 50.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid. 47.

Scriptural examples of faithful mothers include: Jochebed (Exod. 2:1-3), Hannah (1 Sam 1:26-28), Mary (Luke 1:27-30), Eunice, and Lois (2 Tim 1:3-5).

Until relatively recently,[33] the roles and ideals of a Korean wife and mother were strikingly similar to those of ancient Israelite women. Both handled all household chores, including cooking, cleaning, farming, and educating children. Both cultures practiced arranged marriages.[34] Korean women, like Israelite women, lived in patriarchal societies and were expected to carry on the family line by giving birth to a son. Failure to do so in Korean culture was so unacceptable that a barren woman was removed from the married family of her husband.[35] Both cultures practiced concubinage in order to have sons to continue the family line. It continues to be the expectation today that immigrant, married Korean women in the US bear the main responsibility for housework and child care regardless of any employment outside of the home. Korean women place great emphasis on academic success for their children and spend much time supplementing their education at home. Korean mothers continue to give of themselves sacrificially to their children and households.[36]

1.8 Contribution

The fifth commandment, that of honoring parents, remains an unchanging principle just as the other commandments in the Decalogue that are not bound by time or culture. Ideally, social

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[33] Ja Sook Song, *New Millennium South Korea: Neoliberal Capitalism and Transnational Movements*, (New York: Routledge, 2011), 4. From the late 1990s through the early years of the new millennium, in the area of the capital, labor, education, and religion have been transformational.

[34] Rebekah's brother and mother asked her if she was willing to marry Isaac (Gen. 24:56-57).

[35] Mente, *The Korean Mind*, 273.

[36] Pyong Gap Min, *The Burden of Labor on Korean American Wives in and outside the Family*, edited by Young I. Song and Ailee Moon, *Korean American Women: From Tradition to Modern Feminism*, (Westport, Connecticut: Prager, 1998), 89. Although Korean immigrant women are active in their economic roles, they and their husbands are not likely to have changed their traditional gender role attitudes substyle. So, Korean immigrant married women assume most of the housework although most of them work long hours outside the home (90).

relationships are rooted in the parent-child relationship at home. If the bond between the parent and child is solid and healthy, it contributes to the stability of society. However, the reality of increased elder dishonor, neglect, and even abuse indicates that Korean-American adult children may have been influenced to forsake the honoring of parents which develops from a healthy relationship with God and His commandments.

This study will address such questions as: Why is biblical filial piety still important today? How can we properly practice honoring parents in a biblical way? How can the church help Korean-American adult children recapture the importance of parental honor while striving to live as believers straddling two cultures?

CHAPTER 2

The Parent-Child Relationship of Israel in Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16 and in Ancient Near Eastern Texts

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will explore the theological interpretation of biblical honoring of parents in the ancient Israelite family and in ancient Near Eastern contexts. The concept of the parent-child relationship as expressed in the fifth commandment is crucial for our understanding of biblical filial piety. Honoring one's parents is a lifelong practice that begins in childhood and continues to adulthood. Hamilton holds that the fifth commandment is primarily addressed to adult children rather than to young children.[37] Berquist also supports that the Decalogue was established as binding upon adults because they can provide for the welfare of their parents [38] As such, we will begin by analyzing the texts of Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16. In addition, we shall compare the parent-child relationship in Israel to that of the surrounding ANE people such as Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Canaan. The investigation of anthropological and sociocultural backgrounds is pertinent to our study to determine similarities and differences and what, if anything, this says about God and His relationship to and among His people.

2.1 Exegesis Analysis

Fundamentally, exegesis is and has always been an intersection of history, theology, and language.[39] As Bruce Waltke notes, when one interprets the text, he or she needs to be concerned

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[37] Victor P. Hamilton, *Exodus: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 342. He notes the reason why adults give their slaves the seventh day off, do not commit adultery, nor cast their eyes on their neighbor's spouse.

[38] Jon L. Berquist, *Controlling Corporeality: The Body and the Household in Ancient Israel* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 122.

[39] Douglas Mangum and Josh Westbury, *Linguistics & Biblical Exegesis* (Ashland: Lexham Press, 2017), 151.

with the text's reliability, grammar and syntax issues, the meaning of the words, and the context of communication.[40] We must also take into consideration that the Bible was written in different historical languages and cultures and of course is subject to interpretation. As such, the exegetical task plays a crucial role in understanding the Bible's meaning then and applying it to Christian life today.[41]

The commandment to honor one's parents appears in both versions of the Decalogue: Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16. Meyers divides the Decalogue into two sections with the fifth commandment acting as a sort of bridge between the two with respect to language and content:

> The first five all contain the phrase "the Lord your God," whereas the other five do not mention God. Each of the first five includes explanatory statements, which are not present in any of the second group's. The link between these two groups is the fifth commandment about honoring one's parents, who are perhaps the authorities from whom children learn about the ultimate authority of God. That the two groups are inextricably related means that religious and social behavior are intertwined aspects of the covenant. Transgressions in the social realm, as well as the religious realm, are thus sins against God as well as violations of group norms.[42]

We shall analyze the texts of Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16 for determining a theology of biblical filial piety. In particular, we will discuss several terms. 1) The people are

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[40] Willem A. VanGemeren, *A Guide Old Testament Theology and Exegesis: The Introductory Articles from the New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 8. VanGemeren quotes Bruce A. Waltke: "The science of linguistics makes a significant contribution as it links grammar and syntax (syntactics) with the meaning of words (semantics) and the context of communication (pragmatics). Linguistics locates the meaning of words in the triad of Author- Text- Reader, and while penetrating the text for meaning, it reminds the reader of one's subjectivity in all of his or her questions, deliberation, searching, analysis, and synthesis."

The historical and cultural background information may help readers to understand what functions may be available for believers in other times and places. Also, David Veerman notes: "For its benefits, every bible verse appears as part of a larger, coherent unit of thought that has relevance to us. The scriptural application lies in the truth of God's word in specific, life-related situations; it helps people understand what to do or to use what they have learned. The coherency and unity flow from both the OT and NT up today. In *How to Apply the Bible* (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1993), 15.

[41] In doing the exegete's task, we should break down the passage, and examine its language, structure, and all its various components with a view to seeing them both in isolation and in relation to each other.

[42] Carol L Meyers, *Exodus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 164.

instructed to *honor* (כבד) their parents. We will explore why God chooses this term instead of words such as love or take care of. 2) *Your father (*אביך) and *your mother* (אִמֶּךָ). Does the word father point to a biological father, or does it represent other authoritative figures in society? 3) *The land (*האדמה*).* Why is it mentioned specifically with the phrase *the Lord your God gives (*אשר־יהוה אלהיך נתן לך)? Keeping these terms in mind, we shall exegete these two passages.

2.1.1 Exodus 20:12

כַּבֵּד אֶת־אָבִיךָ וְאֶת־אִמֶּךָ לְמַעַן יַאֲרִכוּן יָמֶיךָ עַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ׃ ס

> Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be prolonged on the land which the LORD your God gives you.[43]

2.1.1.1 Honor (כָּבֵד *kabêḏ*)

The concept of honor may differ according to culture and era. In a more general sense, the word "honor" connotes enviable esteem, a valuable reward for excellence in station, character, or service.[44] The Hebrew word for honor, כָּבֵד *(kabêḏ)* means basically "weight."[45] The verbal stem sometimes refers to a literal heavy weight, but it often refers to the metaphor of a heavy weight.[46] Charlie Trimm notes that the word honor is often used without specifying the exact content, but most significantly for our purposes, many texts connect honor with concrete and material actions in the Bible as follows:

> This can be seen in texts where a human honors another human. In the case of Balak's seeking to honor Balaam with money (Num. 22:17, 37; 24:11) and the case when David honored the deceased Ammonite king by sending comforters (2 Sam. 10:3; 1 Chr. 19:3). The connection between honor and concrete and material actions is also viewed in honoring YHWH (Ps. 50:23; Prov. 3:9; 14:31).[47]

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[43] All translations of the biblical text come from the NASB (1995) unless noted.

[44] Merrill C. Tenney and Moises Silva, *The Zondervan Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 209.

[45] William D. Mounce, Zondervan Staff, D. Matthew Smith, and Miles V. Van Pelt, *Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2009), 30.

[46] Charlie Trimm, *Honor Your Parents: A Command for Adults*, JETS 60/2 (2017): 247-63, 253; also, G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament,* Vol. 7, trans. David. E. Green, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), 23.

[47] Trimm, *Honor Your Parents*, 253.

In these references, honoring usually implies some kind of concrete action, flowing out of a correct heart attitude. In the physical sense, the word is related to "gravity" and in the spiritual sense, it is associated with "importance."[48] Mounce illustrates that as wealth is measured in possessions, the rich are literally "heavy" with their belongings.[49] This may be how the concepts of heaviness and honor became related.[50] The Piel form[51] of כבד *(kabêḏ)* means "make someone heavy," or "consider someone important" in the sense of acceptance, respect, or recognition accorded people with a certain social or political status.[52] The Decalogue uses the same Piel form as well.[53] As such, "to honor" is to esteem highly (Isa. 43:4) or consider someone or something as worthy of respect, reverence, and awe.[54] The Piel imperative of כַּבֵּד *(kabêḏ)* expresses recognition of parental authority (Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16; Mal. 1:6).[55]

Another word for honor in the OT is ירא *(yirah),* which is usually translated as "to fear, or to revere" (Lev. 19:3).[56] Proverbs 1:7 equates the fear of God with the acquisition of wisdom.[57] It evokes a sense of terror, awe, and worship.[58] God is the most common object of the verb, and the context determines whether the term is best understood as terror or awe/reverence.[59] Hamilton distinguishes the verbs כבד (*kabêḏ)* and ירא (*yirah*) as follows:

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[48] Mounce, *MCEDONTW,* 30.

[49] Mounce, *MCEDONTW*, 480.

[50] Ibid.

[51] The *Piel* of Hebrew verbal stem is sometimes used to express an intensive type of action with an active voice. In other words, the simple action of the Qual stem will take on some type of intensive nuance in the Piel stem. See also *Bibleworks* 9, the Piel effects or causes condition corresponds to the basic meaning of the root.

[52] Botterweck, Ringgren, and Fabry, *TDOT,* 19.

[53] Trimm, *Honor Your Parents*, 252.

[54] Mounce, *MCEDONTW,* 480.

[55] Tenney and Silva, *ZEB*, 210.

[56] "Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and you shall keep my Sabbaths: I am the LORD your God" (revere - NASB/ESV, fear - KJV, respect – NIV) אִישׁ אִמּוֹ וְאָבִיו תִּירָאוּ וְאֶת־שַׁבְּתֹתַי תִּשְׁמֹרוּ אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם׃.

[57] Proverbs 1:7 describes that the fear (ירא) of God is the acquisition of wisdom, and the reward of the fear of the Lord is wealth, honor, and life (Prov. 22:4).

[58] Mounce, *MCEDONTW*, 355.

[59] Ibid.

> These verbs are frequently attested in parallel stitches. However, the difference between them should not be ignored. The verb ירא acknowledges the inferiority of the subject; the verb כבד acknowledges the superiority of the object (Mal 1:6). Moreover, כבד generally implies a positive act of homage (Num 22:17-18; Judg. 13:17; 2 Sam. 10:3; Isa. 43:20; Prov. 3:9), whereas ירא evokes awe or fear of punishment, and hence, implies refraining from certain actions (Isa 58:13, however, uses כבד for abstentions).[60]

Thus, the use of the verb כַּבֵּד *(kabêḏ)* in the fifth commandment implies that a child recognizes and accepts his or her subordinate social status in relation to their parents, and as such their behavior should pay homage to their mother and father, just as it would to YHWH. The honor ירא (*yirah*) ascribed to God, an awesome honor that evokes fear of punishment for disobedience ties the two terms together. Because one honors God ירא (*yirah*), she or he should be honoring כַּבֵּד *(kabêḏ)* their parents as well. That is to say, since one honors ירא (*yirah*) YHWH because of His awesome power and superiority over humankind, he or she should ascribe the honor due their parents - not so much for fear of punishment - but as actions of respect that are based on their honor of God.

In addition, Weinfeld claims that the word ירא (*yirah*) is not used in the fifth commandment. Therefore honoring parents does not refer to terror, but to admiration or reverence.[61] Fear as reverence is the covenantal response to the Lord.[62] It is interesting to note that Leviticus 19 contains a somewhat fragmented version of the Decalogue, which contains

[60] Hamilton, *Exodus* 1608-1609. Hamilton mentions that the rabbis exemplify this distinction regarding behavior toward one's father: ירא means to abstain from bad acts, such as interrupting him, contradicting him, or occupying his seat: כבד means to act on his behalf, such as feeding him, dressing him, and supporting him. Perhaps ירא was chosen because of the juxtaposition of the Sabbath, which is kept by abstentions. However, the meaning of ירא here is not "fear," but "revere."

[61] Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy 1-11: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 5 (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 310.

[62] Ibid.

multiple allusions to the Exodus version.[63] Tigay argues that Leviticus chapter 19 is related to the code of holiness and echoes the Ten Commandments:[64]

Leviticus 19	**The Ten Commandments**
Reverence for parents (v. 3a)	Honoring parents (the fifth commandment)
The Sabbath (v. 3b)	The Sabbath (the fourth commandment)
Idolatry (v. 4)	Idolatry; worship of other gods (the second commandment)

Significant for our purposes is that in Lev.19:3, the practices of honoring one's parents and Sabbath observance both reflect God's holiness and sovereignty. Holiness is the quintessential quality of the relationship between Yahweh and His people.[65] The concepts of fear, יראּ (*yirah*), and holiness קֹדֶשׁ *(kedesh)* are interwoven, for reverent fear is a primary human response to the holy.[66]

In Lev. 19:2-3, YHWH commands:

דַּבֵּר אֶל־כָּל־עֲדַת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם קְדֹשִׁים תִּהְיוּ כִּי קָדוֹשׁ אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם׃

אִישׁ אִמּוֹ וְאָבִיו תִּירָאוּ וְאֶת־שַׁבְּתֹתַי תִּשְׁמֹרוּ אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם׃

> Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, you shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy. Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and you shall keep my Sabbaths: I am the LORD your God.[67]

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[63] Meyers, *Exodus,* 164.

[64] Jeffrey H. Tigay, *The JPS Torah Commentary: The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation Deuteronomy =: [Davarim]* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 124. Tigay notes: "In most cases, the parallels are so precise that a literary connection between Leviticus chapter 19 and Ezekiel 22:6-12 is most probable. In the prophecy, there is reference to the following six items prominent in chapter 19: (1) humiliation of parents, (2) cheating strangers, (3) despising Sabbaths and sacred offerings, (4) depravity, (5) defrauding one's own kinsfolk, and (6) baseness. Chapter 19 thus emerges as a major biblical statement on the duties of the Israelite people. The entire people is addressed in the plural, and all of what is said is related directly to the opening statement: "You shall be holy…" The emphasis on duties basic to collective existence stands out in bold relief; the concept of a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation," expressed in the words of Exodus 19:6, is the unifying theme of chapter 19" (125). It seems that he is talking about the connection between the Leviticus and Ezekiel here.

[65] John E. Hartley, *Leviticus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 312. Hartley notes: "Whereas God's holiness is dynamic, outgoing, Israel makes herself holy by separating herself from sin and all that defiles in order to experience the sanctifying presence of God."

[66] Ibid. 309.

[67] ESV version.

The Hebrew word for holy is קָדֹוֹשׁ *(kadosh)*, meaning "separated, isolated, different from the surroundings." Morenz views קדוֹשׁ (*kadosh*) as "set apart."[68] Unlike the surrounding nations, Israel must be holy since God is holy. They are set apart as God's treasured possession (Exod. 19:5). Close relationship with God entails imitation of Him. Tigay claims that this is known as *imitatio dei*, "imitation of God."[69] In other words, as an image bearer of God, humanity is created with the capacity for true knowledge, true righteousness, and true holiness (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10).[70] Our status as image bearers who are in the process of ever-increasing godliness, should overflow into our practice of honoring parents.

In fact, Hartley argues that fearing one's parents is the foundation of social morality, and keeping the Sabbath is essential for spiritual vitality.[71] Honoring parents and Sabbath observance are grouped together as indicative of holiness. Milgrom suggests that: "The fact that this one verse combines a quintessentially ethical commandment with a quintessentially cultic one is

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[68] Botterweck, Ringgren, and Fabry, *TDOT,* 12:527.

[69] Tigay, *Deuteronomy,* 125. He quotes one of the sages: "It is comparable to the court of a king, and what is the court duty? It is to imitate the king."

[70] The Hebrew word image is צֶלֶם (*zelem*), referring to a "replica" or a "representative"; the word for likeness is דְּמוּת (*demut*) means "to be like" or "to resemble" (Abraham Park, *The Promise of the Eternal Covenant*, 27). Park notes that: "These words signify that humanity resembles God with respect to His moral, rational, intellectual, and spiritual image, and the image reflected in the body. In Genesis 1:26-27, in the expression "in Our image according to Our likeness" בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כִּדְמוּתֵנוּ (*bezalmenu kidmutenu*), there is no conjunction between the words *image* and *likeness*. Thus, the expressions "in Our image" and "according to Our likeness" possess the same significance in different forms of expression. The words *image* and *likeness* are not referring to something identical to the original form, but to something similar or alike. That is why humanity resembles God and is created to represent God in some important aspects. As God's people live a life separated from the people of the world, their identity is revealed: They are God's people who are destined to follow His holy nature regardless of their weakness and sinful nature."

Eph. 4:24 (ESV), "and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness."; Col. 3:10 (ESV), "and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator." The new self a human being needs to put on is the man in the original state as God created him. He is the universally honored man who serves God in fear and submits to His command. As God's people try to imitate Him, they will be in the process of sanctification.

[71] Hartley, *Leviticus,* 312. Hartley points out that the use of ירא for parents is most unusual. When ירא is used to express respect and devotion, God is usually the object. Thus, the fifth commandment gives parents an exalted place in a child's life.

proof that…both ethics and ritual are of equal value."[72] That is to say, as Botterweck *et al*. claim, that Israel's status as "holy" is directly dependent on its keeping the commandments; thus, it alternates between ethical obedience, abstinence from what is impure, and worship of the one God.[73]

The Mosaic law called for the death penalty for those who cursed or mocked one's parents in words or deeds (Exod. 21:15, 17; Lev. 20:9). Deuteronomy 21:18-21 prescribed severe punishment to a stubborn and rebellious son.

> If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and, though they discipline him, will not listen to them, then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gate of the place where he lives, and they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This our son is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.' Then all the men of the city shall stone him to death with stones. So, you shall purge the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear, and fear.[74]

Roth *et al*. note that this law is more harsh than the parallel law in the Code of Hammurabi, which commands the cutting off of a hand for striking one's father (CH 195).[75] The word, "stubbornness" depicts the image of a heart and forehead as hard and as strong as a stone in the book of Ezekiel (Ezek. 2:4; 3:7-9).[76] The words, "rebellion" and "stubbornness" often

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[72] Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2008), 1608.

[73] Botterweck, Ringgren, and Fabry, *TDOT*, 12:531.

[74] Deuteronomy 21:18-21 (ESV), Deut. 27:16 and Prov. 30:17 also deal with the severe penalty to those who despise their parent.

[75] Martha Tobi Roth, Harry A. Hoffner Jr., and Piotr Michalowski, *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 120. Law of Hammurabi 195 reads: "If a child should strike his father, they shall cut off his hand." But the Law of Hammurabi was not put into practice and served as an extreme case of child education. See Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 197; also, David Marcus, "Juvenile Delinquency in the Bible and the Ancient Near East," *JANES* 13 (1981): 34. Marcus notes: "Striking a non-parent makes one subject to regular criminal law, but striking a parent makes one subject to a 'juvenile delinquent' law which carries a more severe penalty."

[76] Mounce, Smith, and Pelt, *MCEDONTW,* 948. Ezek. 2:4, "So I am sending you to those who are impudent and obstinate children, and you shall say to them, 'This is what the Lord GOD says." Also, Ezek. 3:7-9, "yet the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, since they are not willing to listen to Me. The entire house of Israel certainly is stubborn and obstinate. Behold, I have made your face just as hard as their faces, and your

occur in conjunction with attitudes that are against God. Therefore, as Trimm aptly argues it is likely that resistance to parents implies resistance against God.[77] As such, the punishment for dishonoring parents in biblical times seems much more severe than modern societies would deem appropriate. In addition, abusive or neglectful parents are often thought to be unworthy of honor, and honoring those parents would be far more difficult. Nevertheless, God commanded children to honor their parents. Regardless of the caliber of the parent, God considered the significance of honoring parents important enough to bestow the death penalty on those who ignore the voice of parents, curse them, or disrespect them (Exod. 21:15, 17; Lev. 20:9). Children, as image bearers, should honor their parents just as they honor the Creator.[78]

The various nuances of the Hebrew word for honor *(kabêḏ)* are related to the attitude of the heart. The state of the heart dominates every manifestation of life.[79] According to Wolff, "The heart is called to reason, especially to hear the word of God."[80] Hearing is a constant reminder that Israel was a people summoned by God to hear God's word.[81] Proverbs 1:8 reminds children, "Listen, my son, to your father's instruction. And do not ignore your mother's teaching." Deuteronomy 6:6 records, "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your

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forehead just as hard as their foreheads. Like emery harder than flint I have made your forehead. Do not be afraid of them or be dismayed before them since they are a rebellious house."

[77] Trimm, *Honor Your Parents*, 254.

[78] Cassuto, *Exodu*s, 246. He adds: "on this basis, it is possible to understand the reason for the reward promised in connection with his precept: *that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God is giving you*. The reward is determined on the principle of measure for measure: if your will be vouchsafed long life upon earth."

[79] Hans Walter Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament* (Mifflintown: Sigler Press, 1996), 45. Wolf observes "heart" is the most important word in all the OT anthropological terms. According to him, "It occurs 825 times, and it is the center of a living man. The essential activities of the human heart are in the Bible mental and spiritual in kind." He notes that the heart is the place for thinking, feeling, reasoning, and deciding. Thus, the heart leads one to have a sense of direction of what to do and is called to reason, especially to hear the word of God."

[80] Ibid.

[81] Christopher Wright, *Deuteronomy: New International Biblical Commentary*, Vol. 4 (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996), 95. Also, Walter A. Elwell, "Shema" in *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House), 1945-46. To hear is שמע in Hebrew (Deut. 6:4). The word *shema* (שמע) requires the listeners to respond to the fact wholeheartedly.

heart." Listening to the commandments of God and the instruction of parents is realized in the obedience of children. An important component of obedience on the part of children lies in listening to the advice and commands given by parents.[82] Isaac obeyed, and thereby honored his father Abraham even to the point of death on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:12). As a human response to God and parents, obedience and honor cannot be separated, but as Meyers suggests, honor seems to entail more than just obedience.[83]

The practice of honoring one's parents continued into the NT era. The Greek word, honor in the New Testament is τιμάω *(timao)*.[84] It includes showing respect to all people in general.[85] Jesus exhorted religious leaders to honor their parents (Matt. 15:4); Paul encouraged children to honor their parents in the Lord and to provide for financial needs as well as respect for the elderly (Col. 3:20; Eph. 6:1-3; 1 Tim. 5:1). Peter exhorted believers to honor all people, specifically rulers (1 Pet. 2:17). Jesus taught religious leaders that honoring is not merely done with words but should be performed with a sincere heart. He criticized those who declared "what might have been used to help their parents as devoted to God" (Matt. 15:5).[86]

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[82] David E. Garland, "Ephesians" in *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 80; also, Mounce, Smith, and Pelt, *MCEDONTW*, 660 notes that obey for Hebrew word is שמר (*shamar)* which means to listen, pay attention to, or preserve.

[83] Meyers, *Exodus*, 174. As discussed earlier, honor means to show respect and esteem, and even to exalt just as it does when used for one's relationship with God. Also, Garland, "Ephesians," 80. To honor is more than to obey.

[84] Mounce, Smith, and Pelt, *MCEDONTW*, 481.

[85] Ibid. See also Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: Abridged in One Volume* ed. by Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Fredrich (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985), 1182. Bromley notes: "Christians should honor one another (Rom. 12:10), slaves are to honor their masters lest God's name be defamed (1 Tim. 6:1), and men should honor their wives out of loving regard (1 Pet. 3:7). Honor has the meaning of "recognition" (Jn. 4:44). The common combination with *doxa* occurs in Christological statements in 2 Pet. 1:17 and Heb. 2:7. Dignity of offices is the point in Heb. 5:4. Christians also have honor according to 1 Pet. 2:7. They share Christ's honor as living stones built into the spiritual house. In 1 Pet. 1:7 those who prove their faith in affliction will have praise, glory, and honor when Christ comes. The word honor has the meaning of 'value or price.'

[86] Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1993), 353. Corban was a Hebrew or Aramaic word that Mark translates as "gift" (Lev. 2:1-2, 8, 14) and refers to the legal device of declaring something that one owns as destined to be given in an offering to God; also, John H. Walton and Craig S. Keener, *NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible: Bringing to Life the Ancient World of Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 1703: "Jewish people could vow and dedicate

In the NT period, in order to strengthen the values, ways, and customs of the Jews in the Hellenistic culture of the time, Ben Sira published a book of wisdom.[87] His use of honor and shame focused on the relationship between the young and their parents' traditions. For him, fearing the Lord and obedience to the commandments became the decisive criteria for evaluating honor.[88] In other words, one's own honor was inextricably bound to the honor of one's parents; dishonoring parents led to one's own dishonor and reproach.[89]

In summary, we have explored the meaning of honor in both Hebrew and Greek. The Hebrew words for honor, כבד *(kabêḏ)* and ירא *(yirah)* are closely related in that the one who is due honor is in some way superior to the one who is offering it. The ethical honor *(kabêḏ)* afforded parents in the fifth commandment is influenced and ensured by the awesome fear (*yirah)* or honor (*kabêḏ*) that is bestowed upon Yahweh. Both stem from a proper attitude of the

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property to the temple. One could thus render property forbidden for others' use. Some exploited the loophole that this practice created; one could dedicate for sacred use what instead should be used to care for aged parents." The tradition of Corban which held the religious leaders to honor their parents made people deny care for their parents. They misused the Corban for their benefit.

[87] David A. deSilva, "*The Wisdom of Ben Sira: Honor, Shame, and the Maintenance of the Values of a Minority Culture*" (Washington: Catholic Biblical Quarterly, July 1996) V 58 (3), 437. As a Hellenistic Jewish scribe, Ben Sira emphasized obedience to the Torah as the definitive claim to honor in the influence of Hellenism. In the dominant culture of Hellenism, Jews were at the crisis of their own culture. According to deSilva, "Ben Sira lived at a time when certain age groups and classes no longer took it as given that because they were born Jewish, they would adhere to Jewish law and custom. The world was changing, and Israel was a small place in that world, amidst of Syrian Wars between Ptolemaic to Seleucid control to Jewish [Hasmonean] and then to Roman rule during the intertestamental period. Its culture was a minority culture in the world of competing powers which nevertheless shared a dominant culture of Hellenism. Within such a setting, Ben Sira's use of the language of honor and shame appears as a means of preserving or promoting adherence to the values and customs of the minority group, of combatting strong tendencies to assimilate and become like the Gentiles" (438). See also, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira; A New Translation with Notes* by Patrick W. Skehan (Patrick William) and Alexander A Di Lella (New York: Doubleday, 1987). The book is called "The Book of Sirach: The JB and NJB have "Ecclesiasticus," a word taken over directly from the title of the book in many Latin Vulgate MSS. The NEB has Ecclesiasticus or "The Wisdom of Jesus son of Sirach." The RSV has a similar title.

[88] As we see the poem of 3:1-7 related to "The Honor Due Father and Mother": "*Children, pay heed to a father's right; do so that you may live. For the Lord sets a father in honor over his children; a mother's right he confirms over her sons. Whoever honors his father atones for sins; he stores up riches who honors his mother. Whoever honors his father will have joy in his children, and when he prays, he is heard. Whoever honors his father will live a long life; he obeys the Lord who honors his mother. Whoever fears the Lord honors his father, and serves his parents as masters*…"

[89] DeSilva, *Wisdom of Ben Sira,* 441. DeSilva views that attention to the fear of the Lord and the pursuit of wisdom on the one hand, and the neglect on the other, divide the human population into the just and unjust, the pious and impious.

heart. Obedience was an important way of honoring parents. So important was the practice of honoring parents, that failure to do so could result in death.

In the NT period, the practice of honoring parents was taught by Jesus and Paul, despite loopholes such as the practice of corban. Ben Sira tied one's honor with that of the practice of honoring parents. Not to do so was shameful.

2.1.1.2 Your Father (אָבִיךָ *'āḇîḵā*)

The expression "your father" אָבִיךָ ***('āḇîḵā*)** is the second-person masculine singular form given to the assembled Israelites.[90] The purpose of the singular is perhaps to relate each of the commandments to the members of the community as individuals; all the precepts apply directly to everyone.[91] Although the form is masculine, it most likely includes women as they too were expected to obey God's commandments. Alexander argues that this is the only divine speech in Exodus in which God directly addresses each adult Israelite, both male and female. [92] He notes: "While of necessity the Hebrew text uses the second-person masculine singular form, women are automatically included among those being addressed by God."[93] Moses specifically described "your father" and "your mother" individually in the fifth commandment, not the more general term "parents" in order to highlight the importance of honoring each parent equally.

The ultimate authority in the Jewish family was the father. Stager and King note: "The father's word had the authority of command, customary rules, and the provision of a traditional

[90] Meyers, *Exodus*, 165.
[91] Ibid.
[92] T. Desmond Alexander, *Exodus: Apollos Old Testament Commentary 2* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2017), 390.
[93] Ibid. The uniqueness of this occasion is underlined by the fact that the initial section (vv. 2-6) uses the first-person ('I,' 'my,' 'me') with reference to God and the addressees are mentioned throughout in the second person singular ('you,' 'your').

framework."[94] If a father failed to adequately teach, he might be criticized by society.[95] Fatherhood involved instruction and discipline of his children (Prov. 13:24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13). He was obliged to serve the family by modeling strict personal fidelity to Yahweh, instructing the family in the traditions of the Torah, and managing the land according to its regulations in order to ensure the family's security with God.[96] He was especially responsible for consecrating his first-born son to Yahweh.[97] He guarded his own ethical conduct so that his sons would not be implicated in their sins. The Babylonian Talmud established the fact that the father circumcised his son, taught him the books of Moses, searched for a wife for him, and taught him a trade as a means of livelihood.[98] He continued to exercise great and decisive influence over the lives of his children even after they were married.[99]

Once children reached adolescence, the childrearing tasks were organized according to gender.[100] Sons would spend more and more time with their fathers, learning the skills and developing the character required for responsible male adulthood such as hunting, handling

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[94] Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 36. The father also served as the chief teacher of their children along with his wife (Deut. 4:9; 6:7; 31:13; Prov. 22:6; Isa. 28:9).

[95] J. I. Packer, Merrill C. Tenney, and William White, Jr., *Nelson's Illustrated Encyclopedia of Bible Facts* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1995), 413. When the father does not discipline his children properly, they can be criticized by the people of the community. The priest of Eli's family is a case in point (1 Sam. 2:12-17, 22-36). Even when people pointed out the wicked attitude of Eli's two sons, he did not severely admonish them. The Bible records that they do not know the Lord (1 Sam. 2:12). Because Eli did not teach his children to know about God, they committed many sins before God. Eventually, their disobedience and not knowing God caused them to die at a young age. Moreover, God prophesied to Eli: "Behold, the days are coming when I will eliminate your strength and the strength of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man in your house. And you will look at the distress of *My* dwelling, *in spite of* all the good that I do for Israel; and there will never be an old man in your house. Yet I will not cut off every man of yours from My altar" (1 Sam. 2:31-33).

[96] Ken M. Campbell, *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 47.

[97] Ibid. 53. Fathers assumed responsibility for their sons' spiritual development, modeling before them deep personal commitment to Yahweh and his Torah (Deut. 6:5-6), diligently instructing them in the Torah and the traditions of salvation and covenant.

[98] Tenney and Silva, *ZEB*, 546.

[99] Ibid.

[100] Ibid.

domesticated livestock, and butchering cattle and sheep.[101] The obligation of fathers toward their sons differed from those toward their daughters.[102] Daughters were expected to leave the *bet ab* (house of the father) when they married and as such, training involved in running the household and caring for children, tasks which would fall to the mother.[103] The father protected his daughter from male predators, thereby ensuring her virginity, and thus bringing honor to his name and purity to her husband (Exod. 22:16-17; Deut. 22:13-21).[104] He would also stand up in court for his daughter against her husband if the latter accused her of not having been a virgin at the time of the marriage.[105] These duties contributed to establishing the strong ties and solid foundations of the Hebrew family.[106]

2.1.1.3 Your Mother *(אִמֶּךָ yāmeḵā)*

Being a good wife and mother was extremely important to Hebrew women. The performance of her tasks in managing a household and raising children could determine the failure or success of the family.[107] Women were also expected to prepare crops such as olives and grapes for storage.[108] The mother was responsible for training the young children. Five and six-year-old boys and girls would begin to pick vegetables, gather fuel, and clean up after a meal.[109] She also taught the girls the special skills needed to run a household such as harvesting vegetables, preparing food, spinning yarn, knitting garments, and caring for babies.[110] Instructions included knowledge of commandments, ordinances, and precepts of God (Deut. 6:1). The ultimate goal of

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[101] King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel, 46.*
[102] Campbell, *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*, 54.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Tenney and Silva, *ZEB*, 546.
[107] Packer, Tenney, and White, *NTEBF*, 414.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Janice Pearl Ewurama De-Whyte, *Wom(b)an: A Cultural-Narrative Reading of the Hebrew Bible Barrenness Narratives* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2018), 93.
[110] Ibid.

the mother's instructions was to teach her daughters how to become successful wives and mothers.[111]

Proverbs 31:10-31 depicts in detail the work of an ideal wife and mother in the Israelite family. In other words, she was responsible for managing the whole household:

> She [the wife][112] knows how to manage a household and provide for her family (v. 13, 15, 19, 22). She never wastes her time but spends her time on more important tasks (v. 27). She has a knack for seeing what needs to be done and doing it. She has a good understanding of business, knowing how to buy and sell wisely (v. 16, 24). However, she is not selfish. She helps the needy and gives advice to those who are less wise (v. 26). She also has a deep reverence for God (v.30). She tries in every way to be a "helper fit" for her husband. The poem suggests that when she does all these things, her husband will be lifted to an important place in the eyes of the community (v. 23).[113]

Amidst her busy life, an important duty for women was to produce children in order to continue the family line. Failure to do so (barrenness) was considered shameful in the ANE.[114] De-Whyte argues that women's infertility in the entire ANE including Israel was a tragic physical and spiritual experience.[115] The poignant stories of Rachel (Gen. 30:1-2) and Hannah (1 Sam. 1:9-18) evoke their sense of heartfelt pain and shame due to their barrenness. As such, having children was extremely significant for a woman in order to pass on the genealogical integrity of the family, particularly the male line.

The patronymic system traces kinship through males who play the dominant role in the family and in society (Num. 1:22; 3:15).[116] The patriarchal family ascribes great power to the

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[111] Packer, Tenney, and White, *NIEBF*, 414.
[112] Brackets mine.
[113] Ibid. 424-25.
[114] De-Whyte, *Wom(b)an*, 51.
[115] Ibid. 24.
[116] Tenney and Silva, *ZEB*, 545; Also, *NIEBF* explains that a good father thinks of his children as full human beings and takes note of their feelings and abilities. A Jewish scholar of the time said that a good father should "push them away with the left hand and draw them near with the right hand." This delicate balance between firmness and affection typified the ideal Israelite father, (413).

father as the head of the family who exerts authority over wives, children, slaves, and immigrants (Exod. 20:10).[117] Therefore, the deliberate mention of the mother in the fifth commandment seems significant. It is interesting to note that Leviticus 19:3 mentions the mother before the father in the order, saying: אִישׁ אִמּוֹ וְאָבִיו תִּירָאוּ (*'îš 'imōw ve'āḇîw tîrā'ū,* ...his mother and his father).[118] In addition, Tigay argues that exceptions to the normal pattern of naming the father first in a familiar context are significant.

> In Leviticus 21:2, one's mother comes first in a list of consanguineal relatives. In Genesis 35:18, we observe that the name given to a newborn child by its mother is recorded prior to the name given by the father. The traditional resolution of the unusual order evident in our verse is based on a comparison with the Fifth Commandment, where the father precedes the mother. The two statements, when combined, amounted to an equitable estimation of both parents.[119]

Thus, mentioning the mother is no afterthought. She deserves to be treated with as much respect as the father; the fifth commandment clearly requires respect for both father and mother.[120]

It is important to note that in the OT and the NT as well as the surrounding ANE nations, the term, "father" was a title of great respect and could apply to any esteemed elder, whether a relative or not.[121] Younger persons addressed older men respectfully as father, and older men could address younger men as son.[122] Women in leadership were also called mother. For example, Deborah referred to herself as "a mother in Israel" (Judg. 5:7). As such, fathers and mothers whether biological or not, were regarded as possessing wisdom, knowledge, and

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[117] King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 36.

[118] Bibleworks 9 (third person masculine singular).

[119] Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 125.

[120] Jochem Douma, *The Ten Commandments: Manual for the Christian Life*, trans. Nelson D. Kloosterman (New Jersey: P&R Publishing, 1996), 162.

[121] Craig S. Keener, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary*, Vol. *2A* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019), 144.

[122] Ibid.

spiritual insights and were worthy of honor and respect. The fifth commandment not only applies to biological parents but also extends to esteemed elders.

In summary, Israelite fathers played a crucial role in Israelite society. They were responsible for cultic and ethical teaching and guidance as well as discipline. They also carried out important cultural and traditional practices, such as circumcising their sons and finding suitable wives for them. Fathers instilled practical skills in their sons such as hunting, caring for domesticated livestock, butchering animals, and trading, in order to provide for their families. Daughters were protected under the care of the father.

The role of the mother included managing the household and nurturing the children. Her responsibilities ranged from teaching children's simple tasks like vegetable picking and fuel collection to imparting a wide range of skills to daughters. Additionally, the mother had to ensure that her children learned God's commandments and precepts so that they would grow up to be faithful and virtuous children who would honor God. Thus, the mother was to be honored with the same level of respect as the father. The biblical principle of filial piety emphasizes respect for both parents, the mother and father.

2.1.1.4 That Your Days May be Prolonged in the Land (לְמַעַן יַאֲרִכוּן יָמֶיךָ עַל הָאֲדָמָה *ləma'an ya'ăriḵūn yāmeḵā, 'al hā'ăḏāmāh)*

One of the benefits of honoring parents according to the fifth commandment is a long sojourn in the land. Campbell notes that getting old is viewed positively and affirmed as desirable:

> In contrast to the longing for the "fountain of youth" or the fruit that would keep one in a state of perpetual youth found in extrabiblical literature, old age was the Israelite ideal, the time of fulfillment. Nor would ancient Israelites have considered it rude to inquire directly about one's age, and in response to such inquiry to express pride in one's longevity. On the other hand, it was axiomatic that the wicked died young (Job 36:6, 14). To attain the "fullness of days," "a ripe

> old age," or "satiation of days" was interpreted as a sign of divine favor and a reward for faithfulness to Yahweh's covenant (Deut. 6:2; 22:7; 25:15).[123]

The word "long" (יַאֲרִכוּן, *ya'ărikūn*) is used only here in Exodus.[124] It appears ten times in Deuteronomy apart from its use in the Decalogue (Deut. 5:16). It is used positively eight times to refer to the promise of long life for obedience (4:40; 5:33; 6:2; 11:9; 17:20; 22:7; 25:15; 32:47).[125] It appears twice negatively to refer to the loss of long life for disobedience (4:26; 30:18).[126] Thus, long life is associated with obedience to Torah, and a life cut short because of disobedience.

The Hebrew word for the land is הָאֲדָמָה (*hā'ădāmāh*) and is closely related to the word man, אָדָם (*Adam*).[127] This suggests a correlation between God's people and His land. In addition, the land is continually referred to as the ultimate gracious gift that the Lord gives to the people of Israel.[128] Frankel identifies a relationship between the land, the people, and God:

> The land of Israel's settlement is the Lord's, and the Israelites are mere sojourners in His land. So, Israel has no real title to the land…. the idea that the land belongs to the Lord as His own private estate implies an intimate and lasting relationship between the Lord and the land. The land of Israel is not merely the land that the Lord designated for Israelite settlement. It is the land that the Lord has chosen for His own home, and as such, it is a holy territory (Ps. 78:54) … One could hardly worship the Lord of the land on any other territory.[129]

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[123] Campbell, *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*, 97.

[124] Hamilton, *Exodus*, 342

[125] Ibid.

[126] Ibid.

[127] The אֲדָמָה (*ădāmāh*), which means "ground" or "land" seems connected and is not separable. Also, the relationship between the man and the land is related to each other.

[128] Those who obey the commands or laws inherit the land (Deut. 4:1; 8:1), and the disobedient are warned that plague and disaster would pour down on the land (Deut. 29:21-26).

[129] David Frankel, *The Land of Canaan and the Destiny of Israel: Theologies of Territory in the Hebrew Bible* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 11.

Throughout the Bible, dwelling in the land reflects the faith of God's people. The Israelites were displaced from God's provided and promised land because of their disobedience. Israel's history is full of settlement, expulsion, and return to their home from Eden to the Exile.[130] God's promise to Abraham affirms a land for His people, exhibiting the consistent will of God that began with His placement of humans in the Garden. This promise would come to fruition with the Exodus and the entrance to the land. Tenney notes: "They were being led back to "Eden" where they could live their lives in worshipful obedience to God. Thus, life in the land of Canaan is much more than mere human socio-economic relationships – it has to do with God's intended destiny for His people."[131] Despite the prophets' encouragement to obey and worship God, Israel's continued disobedience caused them to be displaced from the land. The covenant curses came to pass as the Babylonians devastated the land, destroyed Jerusalem, and carried many people into exile.[132] However, God graciously brought them back to their homeland once again. As such, possession of and living in the land reflects the faith and obedience of God's people who dwell there as perhaps also God's commitment to His land.

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[130] Lev. 18:25 and 20:22 describe, if the land is defiled by people's sins by not keeping God's command, the land vomits its inhabitants. Lev. 18:24-28, "Do not defile yourselves by any of these things; for by all these things the nations which I am driving out from you have become defiled. For the land has become defiled, therefore I have brought its punishment upon it, so the land has vomited out its inhabitants. But as for you, you are to keep My statutes and My judgments, and you shall not do any of these abominations, *neither* the native, nor the stranger who resides among you (for the people of the land who were *there* before you did all these abominations, and the land has become defiled), so that the land will not vomit you out should you defile it, as it has vomited out the nation which was *there* before you"; also Lev. 20:22, "You are therefore to keep all My statutes and all My ordinances, and do them, so that the land to which I am bringing you to live will not vomit you out."

[131] Tenney and Silva, *ZEB*, 978.

[132] Riet Bons-Storm, *A Place to Share: Some Thoughts about the Meaning of Territory and Boundaries in Our Thinking about God and Humanity* (South Africa: HTS, January 2008), Vol. 64. 1. 148. Prophets before, during, and after the physical exile wrote about a glorious day ahead when God and His people would return to the land to live in the blissful conditions that would be established at that time (Ezek. 43; Isa. 40). N. T. Wright, *Christian Origin and the Question of God.* Vol.1*: The New Testament and the People of God*, (London: SPCK, 1992), 268-69 has shown that during the time between the Testaments, many Jews, even though physically living in the land, still thought of themselves as being in exile – for the glorious future described by the prophets had not developed. Indeed, although they were living in the land, they saw themselves as under foreign domination.

It is interesting to note that Paul quotes the fifth commandment as the first commandment with a promise in Eph. 6:2 and the reward in verse 3: "That it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." Skevington Wood argues that the Greek word first (*protos*) means first in importance rather than in the sequence of the Decalogue and as such, the fifth commandment is of vital importance for children to learn,[133] in order to live a blessed life and long life span in the land God gives (Eph. 6:1-3).[134] God consistently encouraged His people throughout history to keep the fifth commandment in order to receive His promised blessings in the land.

Moreover, the concept of land is closely bound to the notion of inheritance and possession in the Bible. Brueggemann[135] claims that the Bible itself is primarily concerned with the issue of being displaced and yearning for a place.[136] According to him, humanity needs to belong to a certain place, where the roots of a community are experienced and where its members can feel safe, empowered by the religious conviction that they belong there.[137] Thus, places can be thought of as the seat of relationships, or the place of meeting and activity in the interaction between God, the world, and His people.[138] That is to say, God relates *to* people *in*

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[133] A. Skevington Wood, "*Ephesians*" in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Corporation, 1978), 80.

[134] Eph. 6:1-3 records: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." Faithfulness and obedience of people are required. Deut. 5:33 also records: "You shall walk in all the way which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong *your* days in the land which you will possess."

[135] Bons-Storm views Brueggemann as one of the first to focus on the preoccupation with place in the Bible: place figures as a primary category of faith, and land is a central theme in his article entitled, *Place to Share*; see also, John Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 35. Inge observes Brueggemann's view that the narrative of the OT centers around land, and that the importance of this land is that it is a particular place which has been promised: the central human problem of homelessness and seeks to respond to that agenda in terms of grasp and gift.

[136] Walter Brueggemann, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2002), 2.

[137] Bons-Storm, *Place to Share*. 35.

[138] Inge, *Christian Theology of Place*, 58 notes that although emphasis upon the Holy Land and Jerusalem recedes in the NT, the incarnation – and the particularity of God's relationship with humanity which flows from it –

places, and the places are not irrelevant to that relationship, but rather, are integral to divine-human encounters.[139]

The land is a major concern of contemporary people as well.[140] What does "land" mean to those who are living in modern times? Brueggemann suggests that the land possesses both meanings as follows:

> The land is used to refer to actual earthly turf where people can be safe and secure where meaning and well-being are enjoyed without pressure or coercion. The land will also be used in a symbolic sense as the Bible itself uses it to express the wholeness of joy and well-being characterized by social coherence and personal ease in prosperity, security, and freedom. It will be important to recognize both in biblical usage and in contemporary usage as well, that land continually moves back and forth between literal and symbolic intentions.[141]

The notion of land includes not only earthly blessings, such as prosperity and security but also spiritual blessings, such as a sense of promise and fulfillment by God.[142] The land of Israel as the promised land is a place alive with memories of emotional and spiritual experiences with their God. As such, God and the promised land as their territory have become entwined.[143] Thus, the biblical concept of land is for God's people to ultimately return to "Edenic land conditions," where God's people will dwell with Him in blessed worship and obedience.[144] This magnificent promise will be perfectly fulfilled in those who believe and practice His command in Jesus Christ on their earthly pilgrimage (Heb. 11:8-16). As God's people obey His word, they can

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supports the notion of place retaining vital significance in God's dealings with humanity. In the NT, the land shifts to the place where God dwells (e.g., Gal. 4:25-26; Phil. 3:20-21; Heb. 12:22-24).

[139] Inge, *Christian Theology of Place*, 58.

[140] Brueggemann, *Land, 2.*

[141] Ibid.

[142] Tenney and Silva, *ZEB,* 977 comments: "The extended literary unit that was formed by initially independent textual traditions that were subsequently linked together to form the Hexateuch (the Pentateuch and the book of Joshua) was bound together.

[143] Bons-Storm, *Place to Share*, 148.

[144] Ibid.

enjoy blessings and benefits on earth and ultimately, enjoy the spiritual blessing of being with God in heaven eternally.

2.1.1.5 The Lord Your God (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ *Yahweh 'ĕlōheḵā*)

The opening statement of the Decalogue in Exodus 20:2 and Deuteronomy 5:6 begins with the declaration of the name of YHWH. Alexander argues that this serves not only as a self-introduction but as a motivation clause.[145] In Exodus 20:2, the phrase 'I YHWH' (אָנֹכִי יְהוָה *'ānōḵî Yahwah)* is normally followed by the word, אֱלֹהֶיךָ (*'ĕlōheḵā* 'your God'), the possessive pronoun 'your' being in the singular (Exod. 20:2, 5; Deut. 5:6, 9; Ps. 81:11; Isa. 51:15). When the expression אֲנִי יְהוָה (*'ănî Yahweh 'I [am]Yahweh'*) is followed by 'your God,' the possessive pronoun 'your' is almost always in the plural אֱלֹהֵיכֶם (*'ĕlōhêḵem* Lev. 11:44; 18:30; 19:36; 20:24; 23:22; Num. 10:10; Ezek. 20:19).[146] By introducing himself using the formula אָנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ *('ănî Yahweh'ĕlōheḵā* 'I am your God'), YHWH underscores the personal nature of this divine-human relationship. He addresses each individual, rather than the community just as a collective whole.[147]

Also, the introduction of the Decalogue clearly mandates the absolute prohibition of polytheism and idolatry for the entire people of Israel:

> You shall have no other gods besides Me. You shall not make for yourself a sculptured image, or any likeness of what is in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them.[148]

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[145] Alexander, *Exodus,* 398. He goes on to say: "The whole of v. 2 certainly provides a reason for the Israelites to keep the obligations outlined in the Decalogue. Perhaps, however, v. 2 should be viewed as being primarily the motivation clause for the first 'word.' Not only does the final phrase of v. 3, 'in my presence,' presuppose that the identity of the speaker has already been announced, as occurs in v. 2, but by viewing v. 2 as a motivation clause the first 'word' is brought into line with the next four, all of which contain statements encouraging compliance from the listening Israelites."

[146] Ibid. 399.

[147] Ibid.

[148] Nahum M. Sarna, *Exploring Exodus: The Origins of Biblical Israel* (New York: Schocken Books, 1996), 144.

This strict and comprehensive formulation demands the exclusive recognition of and allegiance to one God, the One who had shown Himself to be active in history and who was known to Israel by name.[149] Deuteronomy 10:17 states that Yahweh is the God of gods and Lord of lords who has absolute sovereignty over all other gods. A name often reveals a being's identity, character, and nature.[150] For example, El Shaddai was the name of God usually associated with the patriarchs and matriarchs of Israel (Gen. 17:1; 28:3; 35:11).[151]

Bowie argues that identities are defined by boundaries, and boundaries are set by society.[152] A person becomes aware of a particular identity when faced with another that is different. As such, identity is defined by the other.[153] Walton argues that in ANE belief systems, most religions had a pantheon, or divine assembly that ruled the realm of the gods, the supernatural, and ultimately, the human world.[154] Typically, one deity was designated head of the pantheon.[155] Israel's monotheistic relationship with YHWH differed greatly from that of the surrounding people and their gods. For the nations, their relationship was one of appeasement as they appealed to the gods for protection and assistance, not for a relationship.[156]

Although ANE people submitted, feared, bowed down, and trembled before their deities, they did not love or even like them.[157] However, the relationship of the Israelites with YHWH

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[149] Ibid. 144-45.

[150] The name of God could not be found out by human power or will and was not called carelessly, and it was possible only when God revealed it. When Moses asked for His name, YHWH expressed, "I AM WHO I AM," identifying that He is the one before eternity and transcends time and space (Exod. 3:13-14).

[151] Roni Dorsey, *Theology in Story: A Theology of Life after Death Embedded within the Old Testament Narratives*, 115.

[152] F. Bowie, *The Anthropology of Religion* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 72.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Walton, Matthews, and Chavalas, *IVPBBCOT*, 95.

[155] Ibid.

[156] John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*, (Grand Rapids. Mich.: Baker Academic, 2007), 161.

[157] Ibid. Walton argues that the gods were viewed as having all of the same qualities, good and bad as humans but without as many limitations. They had more stronger power and a longer span of existence than people (103).

has been revealed as a loving reciprocal relationship such as that of a parent and child. Yahweh's gracious love toward Israel and Israel's obligation to love Yahweh is well documented in Deuteronomy.[158] Lundbom points out that Deuteronomy, especially, has more to say about love than any other OT book.[159] Yahweh's love for the patriarchs and for Israel is expressed in many parts in the covenantal context.

In Exodus 20:2, prior to the first commandment, God announces His name – I am the LORD your God. Cassuto notes:

> The Eastern kings were accustomed to beginning their solemn declarations respecting their deeds. And so, too the King of the universe commences His declaration to man – in man's own style: *I, the Speaker, am called YHWH*, and *I am your God* specifically. Although I am יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ 'the God of the whole earth,' yet I am your God in the sense that you recognized Me and sanctified your life to My service, and I am also your God in the sense that, in consideration of this sanctification, I have chosen you to be the people of My special possession from among all the peoples of the earth; and it is I *who brought you out of the land of Egypt*, not just bringing you forth from one place to another, but liberating you *from the house of bondage*. Hence it behooves you to serve Me not out of fear and dread, in the way that the other peoples are used to worship their gods, but from a sense of love and gratitude. And bear in mind that I shall not tolerate your associating with Me any other god from among the divinities of the peoples round about you: *you shall have no other gods*.[160]

The name Yahweh is associated with His covenantal relationship with Israel. This expression "the Lord your God" appears in each of the first five commandments.[161] Sarna claims that the phrase "the Lord your God" in this command expresses the relationship of Israel to God metaphorically in filial terms, and the same verbs of honoring and revering are used in describing

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[158] Jack R. Lundbom, *Deuteronomy: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013), 61.

[159] Ibid.

[160] Cassuto, *Commentary on the Book of Exodus*, 241.

[161] Alexander, *Exodus,* 392. He notes that the first pentad reflects particular religious-spiritual duties that need explanation and inculcation while the second pentad reflects social morality based on natural reason guided by the principle of reciprocity, which is common to mankind.

proper human attitudes to both God and parents.[162] In Exodus 19:5, Yahweh describes His relationship with Israel as covenantal, and they were chosen as 'a people of special possession' on condition that they accepted certain obligations: "If you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine."

It is interesting to note as Hartley claims, that the expanded self-introduction of Yahweh at the end of Leviticus chapter 19 (v.36) is identical to the preamble to the Decalogue.[163] This same holy Yahweh led His people to the promised land. The relationship of the Lord God with His people stands in stark contrast with that of the surrounding nations and their gods. Obedience to His commandments because of His greatness and loving character is His due, rather than acts of fear or manipulation.

2.1.2 Deuteronomy 5:16

The Deuteronomy version of the fifth commandment contains some differences from the Exodus text. In the Exodus version, it was Yahweh who delivered the commandments to the Israelites at Sinai. In the Deuteronomic version, the commandments were reiterated by Moses to the Israelites on the plains of Moab.[164] The Deuteronomic version adds: "as the Lord your God has commanded you" and "and that it may go well with you." Forty years earlier at Sinai, God had established Israel as His theocratic people during a new covenant ceremony (Deut. 5:2-3), that

[162] Nahum M. Sarna, *Exodus: The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991), 113.

[163] Hartley, *Leviticus*, 311. אֲנִי֙ יְהוָ֔ה אֱלֹהֵיכֶ֖ם אֲשֶׁר־הוֹצֵאתִי֙ אֶתְכֶ֔ם מֵאֶ֖רֶץ מִצְרָֽיִם *(ani Yahweh elohekem aser howzeti etkem meerez mizrayim* "I am Yahweh your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt).

[164] Deanna A. Thompson, *Deuteronomy: A Theological Commentary on the Bible* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014), 48.

was built upon but not part of the Abrahamic covenant. Caleb and Joshua,[165] and the next generation living under the Sinaitic Covenant were privileged to see the promised land.[166]

Moses stressed the importance of obedience to the second generation, encouraging them to be faithful to God amidst all the challenges they would face in the promised land. He warned them not to assimilate with the Canaanite inhabitants of the land. At this point, we shall briefly discuss the differences between the Exodus and Deuteronomic texts. The Deuteronomy version reads as follows:

כַּבֵּד אֶת־אָבִיךָ וְאֶת־אִמֶּךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוְּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְמַעַן ׀ יַאֲרִיכֻן יָמֶיךָ וּלְמַעַן ׀ יִיטַב לָךְ עַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר־
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ׃ ס

> Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you on the land which the LORD your God gives you.

Deuteronomy 5:16 adds "as the Lord your God has commanded you" and "that it may go well with you" to the Exodus version.

2.1.2.1 As the Lord Your God Has Commanded You (כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוְּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
ka'ăšer ṣiveḵā Yahweh 'ĕlōheḵā)

Craigie asserts the character of Deuteronomy as a covenant document and as such, this version of the fifth commandment contains covenantal language.

> The covenant at Sinai was not a once-for-all event that had only historical significance. It inaugurated a continuing relationship (which had already been anticipated in the earlier covenants) between God and His people. Because it was a continuing relationship, the covenant was to be renewed regularly, but in each

[165] These two people become examples who listened to the voice of God and followed His instruction through Moses. The period of a forty-year journey was God's concern (Ps. 95:10). Deut. 1:35-38 (NASB), "Not one of these men, this evil generation, shall see the good land which I swore to give your fathers, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him, I will give the land on which he has set foot, and to his sons, because he has followed the LORD fully.' The LORD was angry with me also on your account, saying, 'Not even you shall enter there. Joshua the son of Nun, who stands before you shall himself enter there; encourage him, for he will give it to Israel as an inheritance"; see also, Deut. 2:13-15; Ps. 95:10: "For forty years I was disgusted with *that* generation. And said they are a people who err in their heart. And they do not know My ways."

[166] Meredith G. Kline, *Treaty of the Great King: The Covenant Structure of Deuteronomy: Studies and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1963), 67.

> renewal, the event at Sinai was recalled. The renewal of the covenant was undertaken, not because God changed, but because each generation had to commit itself regularly in love and obedience to the Lord of the covenant. In the address of Moses, the most powerful exhortation is used to move the people to a new and wholehearted commitment to God. The tendency to view the covenant as a legal contract automatically binding man to God had to be countered; the nature of the covenant, as an expression of a living relationship, demanded of man not a legalistic acquiescence, but a loving commitment to God.[167]

God expected His people for all generations to love Him and be faithful to Him just as He had been faithful and shown His love to them. Listening to Yahweh's voice, loving Him, fearing Him, and walking in His ways are proper responses to a loving and living covenantal relationship.

2.1.2.2 That It May Go Well for You on the Land (וּלְמַעַן יִיטַב לָךְ עַל הָאֲדָמָה *ūləma'an yîṭaḇ lāḵ, 'al hā 'ăḏāmāh)*

To "go well" in the land יִיטַב (*yîṭaḇ)* is related to prosperity and is used in the covenant relationship pertaining to the patriarchs.[168] God would bless His people with land and progeny.[169] Harstad supports that the subject "it" in this verse represents all aspects of life; the unexpressed

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[167] Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 17. Craigie views Deuteronomy as not primarily a corpus of law, nor even a historical record; rather, it purports to be a record of words designed for Israelites' obedience and commitment to the Lord of the covenant. In particular, the title of the Deuteronomy shows the feature of the book. Miller also notes in his book, *Deuteronomy* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 1: "The Hebrew title of the book is taken according to custom from its opening words, אֵלֶּה הַדְּבָרִים *(elleh hadabarim)*, "These are the words." Deuteronomy is entirely the words of Moses, but his words are often a reflection of the Lord's words, and the book is clearly interested in the relation of Moses' words to those of the Lord. The book is a collection of words of command and instruction, words of preaching and exhortation. The title of the book is also a reminder of the centrality of the "ten words" (4:13), or the Ten Commandments." Meyers *Exodus,* 163 observes that the imperative verbs introduce nine of the statements, or all ten depending on how they are counted afford some legitimacy to the interpretive label "Ten Commandments." Because "commandment" implies official and formal authority in his book.

[168] BibleWorks from "(863a) מֵיטָב (mêtab) the best." It investigates that יִיטַב is used forty-two times in the Qal imperfect and sixty-three times in the Hiphil. The Hiphil infinitive is used adverbially, "diligently, thoroughly." Also, it says that for Qal perfect, the OT uses tôb (q.v.), which means good: The prosperity in view is in the context of covenantal relation as evidenced by the name Lord YHWH, lovingkindness (hesed), faithfulness *(emet* "truth"), and servant (*ebed*). This helps to understand God's dealing well with the midwives (Exod. 1:20), and Solomon (1 Kings 1:47). It continues to say that God's "doing good" to his people pervades the book of Deuteronomy in the frequently repeated formula – "that it may go well with you" (Deut. 4:40; 5:16, 29; 6:3, 18; 12:25, 28; 22:7) and often in Jeremiah (Jer. 7:23; 38:20; 40:9; 42:6).

[169] Craigie, *Deuteronomy,* 159 points out that the emphasis of the commandment on the continuity of the covenant community presupposes the faithfulness of the covenant God.

agent is Yahweh who makes "it" (all aspects of life) go well for Israel.[170] Wright argues that the promise and hope for long life in the land are common in Deuteronomy, but it is specifically attached to the fifth commandment because the health, integrity, and economic viability of Israel's households held the key to the nation's survival in the land.[171]

In summary, the fifth commandment found in the Deuteronomy text includes some additional phrases not found in the Exodus text. By including the expressions "as the Lord your God has commanded you" and "that it may go well with you on the land," God appears to be reinforcing the importance of honoring one's parents to the Israelites through the use of conventional language. He thereby emphasizes the practice of biblical filial piety, as crucial to living a life filled with blessings and prosperity in the promised land.

2.2 The Parent-Child Relationship in the ANE

The unique geographical location of Israel, situated between Egypt and Mesopotamia, contributed to its culture.[172] A Sumerian proverb states: "Marrying several wives is human; getting many children is divine."[173] Children played an important part in the family household's economic system.[174] In Egypt, it was thought that children were able to influence the gods in

[170] Adolph L. Harstad, *Deuteronomy: A Theological Exposition of Sacred Scripture*, (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2022), 203. The Qual of יָטַב often is used impersonally.

[171] Christopher J. H. Wright, *Deuteronomy* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 77-78. Also, Skevington Wood in his book "*Ephesians,*" 82 that as a requisite, Paul encourages children to obey their parents in the Lord in Eph.6:1. According to him, Paul probably does not mean that children obey their Christian parents. Rather, he would indicate obedience must be a part of their relation to the Lord. It is likely that in obedience to their parents, children's true welfare depends on God. In that relationship, they will enjoy satisfaction of life. Also, Klyne Snodgrass have similar view with Wood by saying: "Paul argues theologically from a Christian framework" in *Ephesians: From Biblical Text to Contemporary Life* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 322. It means that children's relation to Christ makes them obey their parents, and that is right from a Christian aspect.

[172] Obed Borowski, *Daily Life in Biblical Times* (Society of Biblical Literature: Atlanta, 2003), 1. Borowski claims that more than any other country in the ANE, Israel was always directly or indirectly connected with other parts of the ANE and the eastern Mediterranean.

[173] Julie F. Parker and Sharon Betsworth, *T&T Clark Handbook of Children in the Bible and the Biblical World* (New York: T & T Clark, 2019), 79.

[174] Kristine Henriksen Garroway, *Children in the Ancient Near Eastern Household* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2014), 13.

assisting those in need and thus were taken to sacred places to strengthen the petitions of the adults they accompanied.[175] Honoring parents was a duty not only recognized by the Israelites but also by Sumerians, Babylonians, and Ugaritians.[176] Walton suggests that without understanding the cultural context of the ANE and Israel, the theology of the text may not be clear.[177] In this section, we will not focus on comparative studies of the practice of honoring parents since it was important in all of these cultures. Rather, we will briefly survey how Israel differed from its neighbors theologically.

2.2.1 The Parent-Child Relationship in Mesopotamia

Children were necessary for the perpetuation of a household.[178] In particular, sons were preferable as they ensured the retention of family land and wealth.[179] Both the mother and father were involved in rearing the children.[180] The Akkadian verb used for raising children *rubbu* also applied to the harvesting of plants and trees.[181] It implied nurturing, rearing, and provision of care to children until they reach full age.[182] It was often used in relation to the practice of paying

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[175] Nicola Harrington, "*The Ancient Egyptian Conception of Children and Childhood*," edt by Lesly A. Beaumont, Matthew Dillon from *Children in Antiquity Perspectives and Experiences of Childhood in the Ancient Mediterranean* (London: Routledge, 2020), 22.

[176] Marten Stol and S. P. Vleeming, *The Care of the Elderly in Mesopotamia in the Old Babylonian Period* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 60. Stol notes: "Literary and royal inscriptions show that children should honor and respect their parents. In the Prologue of the Laws of Lipit-Istar, this king boasts: "…I made the father support his children, I made the child support his father. I made the father stand by his children; I made the child stand by his father."

[177] Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*, 25.

[178] Garroway, *Children in the Ancient Near Eastern Household*, 1, views a household as composed of three basic units: social, material, and behavioral. 19.

[179] De-Whyte, *Wom(b)an*, 27.

[180] Stephanie Lynn Budin, *Women in Antiquity: Real Women across the Ancient World* (New York: Routledge, 2016). 26. Budin suggests that healing cuneiform texts depict pathological aspects that come up in the process of becoming a mother, focusing on pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period, more than on medical issues springing from the expertise of maternity. Instead of the usual Sumerian and Akkadian terms for "mother" (AMA/*ummu*, CAD U sub *ummu*, pp 120-131), Boudin claims that motherhood can be defined from the aspect of the physiology of birth, which is a bodily experience of begetting and giving birth. The specific term "mother" which is AMA*/ummu* refers to the status acquired after giving birth. Especially, emotion and love are related closely to the exercise of motherhood.

[181] Ibid. 27.

[182] Victor Harold Matthews, *Manners and Customs in the Bible* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 21. Matthews asserts that: "Until the time when girls were usually married as soon as they reached puberty while boys often waited until they received their inheritance or had earned enough to establish their own household."

for raising someone, turning up frequently in legal texts regarding adoption or fostering of children.[183] Sumerian, Babylonian, and Ugaritian cultures required that children honor (*kabatu*) and fear (*palahu*) their parents.[184] This honor implied the obligation for children to support their parents economically if needed.[185]

The title of "mother" was conferred on women who had given birth as well as those women that undertook the duties of a caring mother-like guardian.[186] As such, motherhood in ancient Mesopotamia was established through blood ties, provision of motherly duties, legal status, and disposition to provide care.[187] Older people who had no children adopted a slave from their household or an adult to be their son to care for their needs,[188] manage the financial affairs of the parental estate and see to it that the parents received their monthly ration of food and other necessities of life.[189]

The system of adoption was well organized in Mesopotamia. Disobedient adopted children could be disowned. Parents emphasized their domestic cult and honoring parents to their children whether adopted or biological.[190] Children were responsible for the domestic cult as

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[183] Budin, *Women in Antiquity*, 27.

[184] Stol and Vleeming, *Care of the Elderly in Mesopotamia in the Old Babylonian Period*, 60.

[185] Ibid.

[186] Ibid., 30. Stol notes: *"Ummu* provided children with nourishment and education; they contributed to the establishment and strengthening of non-biological bonds that could have a deep impact on the individual's life."

[187] Budin, *Women in Antiquity*, 31. Budin notes that Mesopotamian documentary evidence also gives information regarding the regulation of adoption, inheritance, other family issues, and maternity-related activities such as compensation to wet nurses for breast-feeding. These sources provide a different impression of social values and experiences related to motherhood since they focus more on the legal and economic dimensions and implications of parenthood, and less on the personal and affective relationships established between mother and son or daughter, (32).

[188] Campbell, *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*, 19. According to Campbell, "The most common type of adoption was one in which a man adopted one or more sons. Within the contract, certain responsibilities were placed on the adopted sons in exchange for a portion of the inheritable property. It meant that the son(s) provided a set amount of food for his new parents (PBS 8/2.145) and even he paid off a debt owed by his adoptive father (BE 6/2.28)."

[189] Ibid. 20.

[190] Shawn W. Flynn, *Children in Ancient Israel: The Hebrew Bible and Mesopotamia in Comparative Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 175.

well as for their parent's burials and could be removed from these duties in cases of disinheritance.[191] While some contracts referenced taking care of the household cult or distributing the proper amount of wealth to dependents according to the adoption contract, many of the contracts simply used a generalized clause to ensure respecting the parents.[192]

Crime and delinquency within the domestic context were serious concerns since they threatened the social cohesion of the family unit and its cultic responsibilities.[193] Thus responsibility to the family was viewed as so essential that the legal system served to protect it from problems stemming from the child.[194] The child took part in upholding the family status:

> In the criminal sense, disturbing the nuclear family was punishable in greater extremes than with most other crimes. The issue of harsh punishment might demonstrate the seriousness with which Mesopotamian society took the role of children in relation to the parents and the domestic cult. Even though the punishment for children breaking a contract with their parent (in adoption cases) or striking their parents (in both adopted and natural births) is more severe than in regular criminal law.[195]

Parental care continued after their death. Children would honor their parents with rituals, offerings of food and drink, and prayers,[196] ensuring the dead ancestors a satisfactory afterlife.[197] The Code of "Hammurabi" is dated several hundred years earlier than Moses.[198] The punishment for children who mistreated their parents was bodily mutilation. The 192nd law commanded: "If a son of a paramour or a prostitute say to his adoptive father or mother: 'You are not my father or

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[191] Ibid. Flynn notes that: "The purpose of caring for the domestic cult is that the benefactor may invoke (*nubbu*), honor (*palahu),* and take care of (*knunnu*) the god in Akkadian words."

[192] Ibid. 179.

[193] Flynn, *Children in Ancient Israel*, 179.

[194] Ibid.

[195] Ibid.

[196] Ibid.

[197] De-Whyte, *Wom(b)an*, 27. The ANE culture entails ancestor worship for the preservation of the family line while Israel honors parents by mourning and burying them.

[198] Walton, Matthews, and Chavalas, *IVPBBCOT*, 94. They argue: "The Ten Commandments are connected to law and a part of the covenant. The literary formulation of the covenant is quite similar to the formulations of international treaties in the ANE. In the stipulations of these treaties, one often finds certain behavior either required or prohibited. In this sense, it could be understood that the apodictic form of the Ten Commandments puts them more in the covenant category than in the law category."

my mother,' his tongue shall be cut off." The 193rd law commanded: "If the son of a paramour or a prostitute desires his father's house and deserts his adoptive father and adoptive mother and goes to his father's house, then shall his eye be put out."[199] These laws appear to be "punishment that fits the crime" by targeting the body part to be amputated is central to the transgression.

Honoring parents was important to the children of ANE. However, in Mesopotamia, the motivation had roots in the social fabric of society. Taking care of the ancestors and the cultic rituals involved were performed for appeasement and favors. For the Israelites, honoring parents is closely related to honoring their God, who loves and cares for them as well. This theologically based filial piety overflowed into society.

2.2.2 The Parent-Child Relationship in Egypt

As with other ANE cultures, the primary purpose of Egyptian marriage was to produce children and perpetuate the family.[200] A wife's function was to bear children and nurture them. Children were weaned at age three.[201] Infant mortality was high in Egypt. Ten to twenty percent of babies died in their first year.[202] Egyptians often delayed the naming of their children which may attest to the fact that a child was not seen as a part of society until it had passed some crucial stage in

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[199] Andrew A. Pyrcz, "*Set in Stone: The Ancient Babylonian Law Code of King Hammurabi*" *Agora* 54. 1 (April 2019): 11-18. Fragments of Hammurabi's collection of 282 laws survive on several clay tablets and the most complete text is engraved on famous black stele. The laws are 'If …then' statements dealing with often mundane contracts, disputes and family matters that somehow resonate with familiarity through the four millennia since their inscription.

[200] Erika Feucht, "Motherhood in Pharaonic Egypt*"* in *Women in Antiquity* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 206.

[201] De-Whyte, *Wom(b)an,* 47; see also Carolyn Graves Brown, *Dancing for Hathor: Women in Ancient Egypt,* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2010), 66. The literature of the New Kingdom *Instruction of Ani* deals with it; also, Mayer I. Gruber, "Breast-Feeding Practices in Biblical Israel and in Old Babylonian Mesopotamia," *JANES* 19 (1989): 61-83. The age of the weaned child typically took place at three years in Mesopotamia as well.

[202] Brown, *Dancing for Hathor,* 65. Brown says that in cultures of high infant mortality children were not considered fully human or mourned like adults. Brown suggests a New Kingdom collection of spells for mother and child, gives a rather chilling indication of this fear, suggesting a spirit 'who comes in the darkness and enters furtively might steal the soul of the child through a vampiric kiss. The New Kingdom *Instructions of Ani* warn: Do not say, "I am too young to be taken," For you do not know your death. When death comes, he steals the infant who is in his mother's arms…"

development.[203] During the dynastic periods, the average lifespan of an Egyptian was 30-36 years, and archeological evidence supports that ordinary Egyptians died young and ill.[204]

Even though patriarchal lineage and inheritance systems were the norm in Egypt,[205] motherhood was regarded as the pinnacle of female achievement in the eyes of society: "Mothers were regarded as paragons."[206] Regardless of whether they were wives, mothers, or daughters, their status remained high.[207] The link between mother and child remained the vital association between Egyptian families and social organizations.[208] The Egyptian literary texts refer to the care owed to one's aged mother although they are silent on the matter of the filial duty to the male parent.[209] For this reason, a child was called "the name of his mother," which always stands at first place in lists.[210] Allen suggests that a child's name was given by its mother.[211]

Mothers took care of the household. The children accompanied her as she performed daily duties, such as grinding corn, going to the market, and gleaning in the field.[212] Mothers usually made their children go to school, but poor mothers required their children to work.[213] In

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[203] Garroway, *Children in the Ancient Near Eastern Household*, 149. Garraway notes that: On average, two to four children per family survived early childhood. If a child made it past these treacherous years, he/she had a good chance of living a long life.

[204] Dorsey, *Theology in Story: Theology of Life after Death Embedded within the Old Testament Narratives* 47. She quotes Davies, *Death, Burial and Rebirth*, 68.

[205] Campbell, *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*, 1.

[206] De-Whyte, *Wom(b)an*, 47. In literature from the Pharaonic period, the mother was regarded as more influential than the father with regard to the education and marriage of her daughter.

[207] Troy D. Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Family: Kinship and Social Structure* (New York: Rutledge, 2009), 33. They were protected in cases of divorce and were the crucial link in the family structure.

[208] Ibid.

[209] Stol and Vleeming, *Care of the Elderly in Mesopotamia in the Old Babylonian Period*, 200.

[210] Feucht, "*Motherhood in Pharaonic Egypt,"* 206.

[211] Allen, *Ancient Egyptian Family*, 32. Feucht claims that at birth, the child's name would be chosen by its mother and father. We see this is also viewed in HB. Rachel named her son Dan (Gen. 30:6, 8, 11, 13, 20, 21, 24), and Pharoah's daughter drew a baby who was in a papyrus basket by the bank of the Nile, and she named him Moses because he was drawn out of the water as its name meant (Exod. 2:10).

[212] Brown, *Dancing for Hathor*, 208.

[213] Ibid. Feucht, "*Motherhood in Pharaonic Egypt,*" 207 notes: "Women had control over property inherited from parents, received from husbands, or acquired themselves, and they bequeathed this property to their children as they saw fit. The oldest testament of a mother that has come down was made by the mother of Metjen (3rd-4th Dynasty). Wah (12th Dynasty) transferred all he received from his brother to his wife, and "she herself shall give it to any of the children that she shall bear me, as she wishes."

exchange for her care, children were charged to be good to their mothers.[214] They were expected to repay their mothers for bringing them up.[215] Feucht notes the following concerning the mother and child relationship:

> When the children had grown up, they were expected to honor their parents, care for them when they were old, bury them, and look after their funerary cult. A son could have a statue or a stele erected for his mother. Antefoker (12th Dynasty) built a tomb for his mother, Senet, although he mostly depicted himself in it. Children were obliged to look after their mother if their father died. On a Middle Kingdom papyrus, the family of Hori probably an eldest son, included his wife, daughter, and his mother with her unmarried daughters. After his death, his son's household comprised his mother with a daughter, his father's mother, and two of his father's sisters. Away from home, Hekanakhte wrote letters to his mother who lived in his household.[216]

Children were obliged to continue the family line, conduct correct rituals, and provide a proper burial for their parents. However, Brown notes that texts from Deir el-Medina make it clear that children did not always support their aging parents.[217] There are instances of older women disinheriting ungrateful offspring.[218] In her will, a mother could designate belongings to certain of her children on the condition that they looked after her during her lifetime and after her death and disinherit them if they did not comply.[219] If the mother made no will, her belongings

[214] Ibid. Feucht shows that Duakheti in his Middle Kingdom instructional text admonishes the son to be honest toward his mother.

[215] Brown, *Dancing for Hathor*, 68 quotes the poem in "The New Kingdom *Instruction of Ani*": "Double the food your mother gave you, support her as she supported you; she had a heavy load in you, but she did not abandon you. When you were born after your months, she was yet yoked (to you), Her breast in your mouth for three years. As you grew and your excrement disgusted, she was not disgusted, saying "What shall I do!" When she sent you to school, and you were taught to write, she kept watching over you daily, with bread and beer in her house. When as a youth you ask a wife, and you are settled in your house, Pay attention to your offspring. Bring him up as did your mother. Do not give her cause to blame you, lest she raise her hands to god and he hears her cries."

[216] Ibid. 210.

[217] Brown, *Dancing for Hathor*, 71 notes: "At times old people were mocked. An ostracon in the Petrie Museum in London reads: 'Do not mimic an old man and an old woman when there are decrepit; beware lest they place a curse on our old ages."

[218] Ibid.

[219] Ibid. 219. Famous is the 20th Dynasty testament of Naunakhte from Deir el-Medina.

were divided among all her children.[220] The child responsible for her burial received a special part.[221]

The practice of honoring parents in Egypt shared some similarities with Mesopotamia such as the practice of adoption that established a means for care and burial of parents, extending the family line, and preserving the family cult. An important part of honoring parents entailed ancestor worship after death.[222] Children who supported their parents were rewarded, and disobedient children were punished by loss of inheritance. As such, the punishment for dishonoring parents, rather than physical punishment like that of Mesopotamia and Israel was related to loss of inheritance. Israel's consequences were associated with the promises of blessings and curses, even death by stoning (Deut. 21:21), thus highlighting the great importance God placed on obedience to the fifth commandment. The parents who gave their children life, and YHWH the ultimate authority who is the source of life, were most certainly due honor in Israel.

2.2.3 The Parent-Child Relationship in Canaan

As in other ANE cultures, Ugaritic society was strongly patriarchal and patrilinear.[223] To ensure the legitimacy of the children, Canaanite marriage was contracted.[224] The head of the household, whether the father or the eldest son was fully responsible for its prosperity and credibility within the community.[225] Campbell observes that: "As a result, his dignity had to be upheld, even if it required him to exercise judgment over members of his family. No father could tolerate the

[220] Ibid.
[221] Ibid.
[222] Trimm, *Honor Your Parents*, 252.
[223] Wilfred G. E. Watson and Nicholas Wyatt, *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies* (Boston: Brill, 1999), 482.
[224] Ibid., 475, 478.
[225] Campbell, *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World,* 1. Campbell notes that the evidence is shown through the texts from Nuzi, Alalakh, and Ugarit.

public humiliation associated with a disrespectful or criminal son." [226] The son's obligation was to support his mother, an indispensable condition for the son to be heir.

The performance of filial duties was essential for the preservation of the paterfamilias, bearing the family name, and ritual activities.[227] The Ugaritic culture believed that the dead belonged to the divine world. As such, children served their dead ancestors regularly, often constructing tombs under the house.[228] In the Ugaritic language, the terms for father, mother, and brother were terms of respect.[229] Thus, a king was referred to as father and the queen, mother.[230]

Adoption was widely practiced in the ANE.[231] The reason for adoption was chiefly the financial security for widows or ensuring patrimony.[232] The firstborn (*rabu*) son in the Ugaritic culture was typically the heir:

> Following a practice customary in the ANE, the firstborn is usually the son to be favored in the distribution of goods. The type of family is patrilinear. Despite this, as RS 8.145 shows, the father could set the conditions of inheritance as he chose. In this document, the father names his wife as heiress to the goods and grants her the faculty of freely appointing either of her two sons as heir. The explicit conditions for the sons to gain the inheritance were not to file proceedings against their mother and to honor her. These are some of the principles which had to guide the behavior of a good son, its literary reflex being given in the 'Epic of Aqhat.' However, a son could also receive part of his inheritance while the father was still alive, and immediately after could leave the family group.[233]

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[226] Watson, and Wyatt, *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies,* 482.

[227] Ibid., 568.

[228] Ibid., 483. Epic and some of the rituals could have preserved reflexes of this type of cult. Family piety in Ugarit would be similar to what is documented in *Emar*. Ancestor worship is a *religious practice based on a belief that deceased family or relative members continue to exist. To commemorate the spirit of a deceased family member, religious beliefs and practices are offered.*

[229] Ibid. 362.

[230] Ibid.

[231] Campbell, *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World,* 87.

[232] Watson and Wyatt, *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies* 479 note: "The act of adoption is carried out in the presence of the king who could also sanction the act retrospectively or else in front of other authorities or witnesses whose names are not mentioned in the documents. In cases of looking for financial security, the obligation of the adoptee seems to be restricted to the financial support of his new family by contributing money and goods. In return, he received important benefits in the event of separation, either in the form of property or money."

[233] Ibid. 480. It is said that in other cases, instead, an adopted person could become an heir to the goods of the adopter to the detriment of the widow.

Failure of an adopted child to follow the instructions of the parents was a serious matter.[234] For example, some contracts anticipated the emotional response of a father whose adopted child troubles or hurts his father's heart. He could legally disown the child posthumously if he did not adhere to his father's wishes.[235]

In summary, most societies in ANE practiced arranged marriages by contract in order to perpetuate the male line and preserve the family name. The wife was expected to produce a son who was to be the heir whether by childbirth or adoption. It was typically the duty of the eldest son to carry on the family line. Parents instructed their children to be obedient in caring for their parents. Care of the parents continued after death through ancestor cults. Children were responsible for the domestic cult as well as for the parents' burials and could be removed from their duties by disinheritance. If children were disobedient or mistreated their parents, they could lose their inheritance.

Honoring parents was important to both the children of the ANE and the sons of Israel. However, the ANE cultures differed from the Hebrew people in that the Hebrews emphasized honoring their parents as tied to their religious heritage whereas the ANE considered it a threat to a sound society. In Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Canaan, it was motivated by social norms and the desire to gain favors. Children were expected to perform filial duties such as caring for aging parents, burial, and maintaining the funerary cult. In particular, ancestor worship was essential. These practices were aimed at preserving the paterfamilias, bearing the family name, and fulfilling ritual obligations.

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[234] Flynn, *Children in Ancient Israel*, 180.

[235] Ibid. The father brought the case to the courts to formalize the disownership when the adopted child dishonor him or his wife.

In contrast, for the Israelites, honoring parents was closely linked to honoring their loving and living God. Unlike the ancestor worship of the ANE, Israelite culture honors one's living parents and as they died, children honored them by mourning and proper burial. They did not engage in the worship of their deceased parents or ancestors, nor did they attempt to appease them. Honoring one's parents in Israel was associated with the blessings of life and land. The consequences of dishonoring were related to the curses loss of land and even death. This underscores the great significance God placed on obedience to the fifth commandment.

2.3 The Fifth Commandment in the Biblical Narrative

Keeping in mind our exegesis of the fifth commandment, we shall now turn to biblical examples of a son who honored his parents and a pair that did not. Even though the actual commandment is not mentioned in these texts, obeying God's command to honor one's parents did indeed lead to life, whereas dishonor resulted in death.

2.3.1 Joseph

Jacob favored Joseph over his other sons as he was the firstborn of his beloved wife Rachel. What is more, all of his brothers knew it. Joesph was an obedient son to his father (Gen. 37:13-14). He honored God by resisting the sexual temptation from Potiphar's wife (no adultery or coveting), saying: "How then could I do this great evil and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:9). He did not worship the Egyptian gods (no other gods before me). He gave God the glory for his gift of dream interpretation, and so on. Joseph honored his father by listening to his voice, providing for his needs, and performing the rituals for his burial, which were the duties of the son. He was a good son who practiced filial piety. Honoring God and his father led to life for the people of God in the land of Egypt and eventually, the land of Israel as presented in the fifth commandment.

2.3.2 The Sons of Eli

1 Samuel 2:12 records that Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas did not know God, and as a result, were judged accordingly (vv. 31-32). Because of their failure to honor God as well as their father, their lives in the land and the lives of their descendants would be cut short.[236] They did not listen to their father's admonition; rather, they ignored him (1 Sam. 2:25). Disregarding their father can be seen as a form of disrespect. They literally would not live long in the land God gave them in accordance with the fifth commandment. They treated God's holy sacrifices with contempt.[237] They lay with the women who served at the doorway to the tent of meeting (1 Sam. 2:22).[238] They were described as 'scoundrels.[239] Their lack of fear of God most likely greatly contributed to the dishonor of their father. The behavior of the sons of Eli illustrates the importance of the fifth commandment and its relationship to honoring God. Failure to honor God and parents are closely linked.

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[236] We know how important the role of parents through the case of Eli is. While continually hearing about the two sons' wicked way (1 Sam. 2: 23-24), his instruction seemed to be weak. The fundamental problem for his discipline appeared that he did not teach about YHWH to his children since they did not know how to honor the Lord (v. 12). He had to chastise his children, and he bore the responsibility for their dishonorable and inappropriate behavior. His lack of astute instruction made them not honor God or him, their father. Unfortunately, Eli's two sons' dishonoring God and their father brought a tragic death for each individual of Eli's family: Hophni and Phinehas died in battle with the Philistines (1 Sam. 4:11), Eli died after hearing about their deaths, and God's ark was taken (1 Sam. 4:18), and his daughter-in-law died in childbirth (1 Sam. 19). They died young, and it was a God's judgment. The reason why they did not honor their God and Eli may lie in his instruction. Eli had to chastise his children, and he bore the responsibility for their dishonorable and inappropriate behavior. His lack of astute instruction made them not honor God or him. Eli's method of education warns modern parents' of disciplining their children, especially, Christian parents and their children.

[237] 1 Sam. 2:13-14: "And the custom of the priests with the people. When any man was offering a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come while the meat was boiling, with a three-pronged fork in his hand. Then he would thrust it into the pan, kettle, caldron, or pot; all that the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. Thus, they did in Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there." Hophni and Phinehas set aside the people's preferences in favor of their liking for meat cooked in their own way, and they ignored God's requirement that the fat should be burned (1 Sam. 2:17).

[238] Tony W. Cartledge, *1 & 2 Samuel* (Macon: Smyth & Helwys Publishing Inc., 2001), 54. According to Cartledge, "The MT includes an allegation that Hophni and Phinehas were also guilty of sleeping with the women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting (v. 22), but the clause is missing from 4QSam[a] and from some versions of the LXX. The wording mirrors the technical priestly language of Exod. 38:8 and may reflect an injection of conditions that prevailed at a later time."

[239] Their behavior contrasts greatly with that of Joseph who feared the Lord and ran away from the wife of Potiphar whereas Eli's sons committed adultery. Also, Cartledge notes: "Scoundrels translates the literal expression "Sons of Belial." Belial means worthlessness or wickedness, and it was such a strong word that centuries later the Qumran community used it as their primary term for the devil" (ibid. 52).

2.4 Summary

The Bible presents a theological lens embedded within the fifth commandment that reveals parallels between the parent and child relationship and that of God and His people. To honor one's parents is to esteem them highly as worthy of respect, reverence, obedience, and awe, just as one should honor God. As children learn to fear the Lord vertically, their attitude toward their parents extends horizontally and vice versa. Honoring parents is like a backbone, connecting one's relationship to God and others. The practice of biblical filial piety encompasses two aspects: physical care throughout their old age and death and spiritual care through obedience to God's commands and awesome reverence for God that was reflected in honorable treatment of their parents.

A survey of honoring parents in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Canaan suggests that they also highly valued honoring parents. However, the consequences of dishonoring parents in Israel were significantly more harsh than those of the surrounding cultures. The practice of honoring one's father and mother in Israel was considered part of their religious heritage – a divine mandate - whereas the surrounding ANE nations considered dishonor of parents as a threat to the soundness of society. Caring for deceased parents seems to differ greatly between Israelite and other ANE cultures. In Israelite culture, proper mourning and burial of the deceased was very important. Isaac and Ishmael buried Abraham in the cave of Machpelah (Gen. 25:9). Joseph mourned for his father, Jacob, and journeyed from Egypt to Canaan in order to give him a proper burial in the cave of Machpelah (Gen. 50:1-14).[240] Thus, while the ANE custom required that

[240] Even Ruth, the Moabite daughter-in-law also promised her mother-in-law loyalty to death and to the grave, including the adoption of Israelite burial custom. Edward F. Campbell Jr. *Ruth*: *A New Translation with Introduction, Notes and Commentary* (AB 7: New Haven & London, 1975), 75.

children maintain an ancestor cult, the Israelite culture, on the other hand, focused on preparing ancestral graves and the mourning process to honor and remember their forefathers.

God commanded Israelites to honor their father and mother. Honoring parents was not only a moral and ethical duty but also contributed to healthy relationships within the family unit by associating the honoring of God with that of parents. It also served as a foundation for treating others in authority and those who are older with honor and respect. Ultimately, biblical filial piety reflected God's nature, who was their ultimate father, worthy of honor and obedience. As such, its biblical and theological importance cannot be overstated. Keeping these thoughts in mind, we will now turn to explore traditional Korean filial piety.

CHAPTER 3

The Traditional Korean Filial Piety

3.0 Introduction

Korea in East Asia, as well as China and Japan, has a remarkable tradition of elder respect rooted in the Confucian teachings of filial piety.[241] In Confucian teaching, the most important point is respect for parents and the elderly.[242] In particular, filial piety in Korea has been a deeply rooted virtue that has shaped the fabric of society for about five-thousand years.[243] Whenever each kingdom achieved national control, a new religion emerged that dominated, and transformed the structure of Korean society. Important for our purposes is the fact that every religion stressed filial piety. The tradition of filial piety is still emphasized quite consistently to this day.

This chapter will focus on understanding and appreciating traditional practices of Korean filial piety. We will examine the founding ideology of *HongIk-InGan* which is related to filial piety, the concept of Korean filial piety, and its close relationship to honoring heaven. Just as the fifth commandment was God's command, so too was Korean filial piety considered a heavenly principle. The ancient Korean people, much like the Hebrews associated honoring heaven (Yahweh) with honoring parents. Finally, we shall see the influence of each state religion of Korea on the practice of filial piety.

3.1 *HongIk-InGan* and *KyungChun AeIn*, the Founding Ideology of Filial Piety

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[241] Kyu-Taik Sung and Han Sung Kim, *Elder Respect Among Young Adults: Exploration of Behavioral Forms in Korea,* Aging International (Summer 2003), 28 (3):279-94, 279.

[242] Ibid. Hereafter respect for the elderly entails respect for parents, elderly relatives, elders in the neighborhood.

[243] Larisa A. Andronova and Ekaterina S. Abrosimova, *Mythologizing History in South Korea* (Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences) Vol. 166 (January 2015):601-604, 602; see also Michael J. Seth, *A Brief History of Korea: Isolation, War, Despotism and Revival: The Fascinating story of a Resilient but Divided People* (Clarendon: Tuttle Publishing, 2019), 13. Seth notes: "The period of five thousand years of history is based on the founding of *Dangun's* kingdom plus a generous rounding off keeping ethnically homogeneous while living on the Korean peninsula."

The practice of Korean filial piety (*Hyo*) is rooted in the founding ideology of *HongIk-InGan*[244] and has been an integral part of Korean culture for five-thousand years.[245] *HongIk-InGan* means to promote the well-being and prosperity of humanity worldwide, emphasizing the mutual assistance, love, and harmonious coexistence of all people. The founding ruler of Korea, *Dangun Wangum*,[246] desired to govern the world with love and peace to benefit humanity.[247] The S*amguk Yusa*[248] written by the ancient Buddhist monk *Ilyeon* records the first leader's command: "Parents were descended from heaven, thus honor your parents and respect heaven."[249] The Korean understanding of this command is not that parents directly descend to earth from heaven, rather they are to be looked upon as precious and esteemed as heaven itself. As such, it implies that

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[244] The transliteration of *Hongik-InGan* in English is "*In Ganul Neoulee Yiropge Hada* 인간을 널리 이롭게 하다" 홍익인간 弘益人間.

[245] Robert E. Buswell, *Religions of Korea in Practice* (Princeton University Press, 2018), xv. Korean history is divided largely into seven periods since it was established in 2333 BCE.

Old Chosun (traditional dates 2333 BCE -194 BCE)
Three Kingdoms period (first century BCE- 668 ADE)
Paekche Kingdom (traditional dates 18 BCE-661ADE)
Goguryeo Kingdom (traditional dates 37 BCE – 668 ADE)
Silla Kingdom (57 BCE -668 ADE)
Unified *Silla* Dynasty (668 ADE -935ADE)
Goryeo Dynasty (918 ADE-1392 ADE)
Chosun Dynasty (1392 ADE-1910 ADE)
Japanese colonial period (1910 ADE-1945 ADE)
Division between North and South Korea (1945 ADE – present)

See also Woo Keun Han, *The History of Korea* (Seoul: The Eul Yoo Publishing Co., 1997) 511-14. Kim divided the Korean history into six periods; 1) primitive and tribal societies (2500 BC- AD 57), 2) the three Kingdoms of *Goguryeo*, *Paekche* and *Silla* (AD 57 - 660), 3) The United Silla Kingdom (AD 660 - 936), 4) The *Goryeo* dynasty (AD 936 -1392), 5) The *Chosun* dynasty (AD 1392 - 1010), and 6) the modern period (AD 1910 -present). The modern era is divided into two. 1) Japanese colonial occupation (AD 1910 - 1945), and 2) status quo as the division of Korean into South and North (AD 1945 -present).

[246] Sung Wook Hong, *Naming God in Korea: The Case of Protestant Christianity* (UK: Regnum Books International, 2008), 57. Hong notes that *Dangun* refers to religious authority and *Wangum* indicates political title as a king/ruler for the theocratic nation.

[247] Ik-Soo Kim, *A Study on the Idea of Filial Piety Inherent in ChamJeon Ge Myeon* 참전계명], Vol. 58, Korean Society for Thought and Culture, 2011, 223-77.

[248] Koog P. Hong, *Abraham, Our Father, the Father of All: A Perspective from Ancient Korean History Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 43 (3) (2019): 371-84, 376. Hong notes: "Most Korean people consider that they are the descendants of *Dangun through the book*, *Samguk Yusa* (삼국유사 三國遺事), for their origin."

[249] Young Joon Cha, *The Traditional Thoughts of Korean* (한국인의 전통사상) (Jeon Joo University Press (전북대학교 출판부) 1999; The University of Michigan, 2007), 53. Translation of Korean into English is mine: "부모는 하늘로 부터 내려 왔으니, 오직 너의 부모를 공경하고 이에 능히 하늘을 공경하여"

children should honor their parents. *HongIk-InGan* stresses the relationship of parent and child as foundational for maintaining social solidarity, and by extension world peace.[250]

Koreans perceive filial piety as a precept commanded by heaven. "Heaven" here does not refer to the blue sky, but rather, the acknowledgment of a transcendent deity.[251] Thus, Korean people believed in the supreme figure in heaven such as God called *Hanunim*.[252] They believed filial piety to be the law of heaven, so they regarded respecting parents and worshipping heaven as equally important, just as the fifth commandment of honoring parents is considered God's command. The tradition of honoring heaven provided Koreans with the strong sense of filial piety. Many ancient texts show the close relationship between filial piety and reverence for heaven.[253] Aam Lee (이암) in the late *Goryeo* Dynasty (37 BC – 668 AD) described the relationship between filial piety and honoring heaven.[254] In his book, *Dangun Segi*, Lee encouraged people to honor their parents and heaven as a duty of humanity following the thought of *Dangun Wangum.*

> From Old *Chosun* of *Dangun* to the present day, the founding ideology of Korea is *HongIk-InGan* and ***JaeSe-Ihwa*** (재세이화 在世理化). These two phrases mean that humanity should respect heavenly principles and love people. Article Three of *Dangun Segi* states that 'To honor your parents is to honor Heaven.' Honoring parents is the starting point of respect for honoring heaven. However, honoring heaven should not be understood as a vertical subservience separate from serving parents. Honoring heaven should go well with respecting parents. Vertical and horizontal honoring should be done together. *KyungChun,* which is, reverence for

[250] Kim, *Study on the Idea of Filial Piety Inherent in ChamJeon Ge Myeon* (참전계명), 245.

[251] Don Baker, *The Great Transformation: Religious Practice in Ch'ondogyo,* in Religions of Korea in Practice, ed. Robert E. Buswell (NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), 450.

[252] Ibid. *Hanunim* is absolute being in heaven such as supreme God.

[253] Seth, *Brief History of Korea,* 13. Such as the founding legend and historical account of *Dangun*, and other works of literature, *Samku Yusa*, *Samguk sagi*, *MyungShym BoGam*, and *SamKang Hang Sil do* and so forth deal with the relationship with filial piety and honoring heaven.

[254] Aam Lee, *檀君世記* [단군세기 *Dangun Segi]* (Incheon, Korea: DRM Institute Publisher, 2021), 16. Lee, Aam was a scholar of the *Goryeo* Dynasty, and he wrote the history of *GoChosun* (고조선) from the 1st year of reign of *Dangun Wangum* to the age of 47. From the legend of *Dangun* in 2333 BC to the late *Goryeo* Dynasty, the honoring of heaven still passed down to the people.

> heaven must always be accompanied by love for both Heaven and people. As we learned from the founding ideology, *HongIk-InGan*, honor and love are inseparable. Respecting Heaven does not mean serving it with a fearful heart and a submissive attitude. Rather, it means to honor the 'universal principle of heaven' with love. True respecting heaven is to love people with a heart of respect.[255]

Therefore, a life of filial piety is based on the universal principle of loving others and honoring heaven.

The ideology of *KyungChun AeIn*[256] which is similar ideology to *HongIk-Ingan* was passed down to the *Chosun* Dynasty. In the *Chosun* Dynasty, the philosophy of *KyungChun AeIn* was extended to include the idea of human love based on human dignity. Yi-Yi[257] argued that humans have dignity, which means that they are moral agents and possess the ability to practice ethical conduct. He promoted *KyungChun AeIn* as the practice of harmonious relationships within families and nations, thereby emphasizing loyal piety for the nation.[258]

단군조선으로부터 오늘날에 이르기까지 우리 민족의 건국이념은 홍익인간 (弘益人間)과 재세이화 (在世理化)이다. 이를 한 마디로 표현하면 경천애인 (敬天愛人), 곧 하늘의 이치를 공경하고 사람을 사랑하라는 것이다. "단군세기" 제 3 조에 의하면 '네 부모를 공경하는 것이 하늘을 공경하는 것이다.'라고 언급된다. 부모에 대한 효가 하늘 공경의 출발점이 되는 것이다. 하지만 하늘을 공경하고 부모를 공경한다고 해서 이러한 공경을 수직적인 복종이라고 이해해서는 안 된다. 항상 경천 (敬天), 하늘 공경은 애인(愛人), 사람 사랑을 동반해야 한다. 우리 민족의 건국이념인 홍익인간에서 알 수 있듯이 공경과 사랑은 따로 분리할 수 없는 것이다. 하늘을 공경한다는 것은 두려워하는 마음으로 굴종적인 태도로 섬긴다는 의미가 아니다. '하늘의 보편적인 이치(天理)'를 존중한다는 것이다. 이치 존중의 마음으로 사람을 사랑하는 것이 진정한 경천敬天이다.

[255] Ibid. Translation of Korean to English is mine.

[256] Lee, *檀君世記* [단군세기 *Dangun Segi]*, 34. *KyungChun AeIn* refers to honoring not only one's parents but also heaven, which are considered the ultimate sources of life. It recognizes that parents are the intermediaries between heaven and their children, as they are the ones who give birth to life. Thus, by serving and honoring their parents, children can demonstrate reverence for the divine and the order of the universe. (아이가 부모를 섬겨야 하는 까닭은 자신의 신체를 부모로부터 받았기 때문인데, 이것은 부모의 부모인 먼 조상까지 이어져 마침내 만물을 낳은 천지를 섬기는 이유가 된다고 하여 효사상을 경천애인 사상 (敬天愛人) 으로 확대 시켰던바, 이는 결국 인간의 존엄성을 바탕으로 하는 인류애의 사상으로도 발전된다.)

[257] Yi-Yi was a scholar who studied Confucius, a philosopher, writer, and politician in *Chosun* Dynasty. He was renowned as the one who practiced filial piety sincerely.

[258] During the absolute monarchy period, the virtue of filial piety was emphasized as much as loyalty. As Koreans demonstrated filial piety wholeheartedly, this sense of devotion extended to loyalty to safeguard the nation. Korea is a small country located in a critical geopolitical place surrounded by China, Russia, and Japan. Due to its location, it has been invaded by many nations and has been colonized.

Arnold Toynbee, a renowned British historian and author of *A Study of History*, stated: "I earnestly hope that Korean filial piety will extend its influence not only within Korea but also to the Western world."[259] Fascinated by Korea's founding ideology of *HongIk-InGan*, Toynbee, in an interview published in the *Dong-A-Ilbo* newspaper on January 1, 1973, predicted that in the 21st century, Northeast Asia would emerge as a prominent center of the world, with Korea's *HongIk-InGan* serving as a vital and foundational ideology.[260] He believed that the Korean practice of filial piety would affect human relationships globally.

The essential nature of traditional Korean filial piety lies not in materialistic aspects alone but in the virtuous heart of serving parents. There is a Korean proverb that says, "Where the heart goes, the body follows."[261] When we possess the spirit of respecting and honoring our parents, it allows us to consider others and can contribute to resolving issues of human relationships and communication.

3.2 Concept of Filial Piety

Filial piety, known as "Hyo (효 孝)," in Korean is a moral obligation of children's respect, obedience, and care toward their parents. It is a virtuous act that stems from the sincere desire to repay the sacrificial love of parents. *The Book of Filial Piety*[262] records that filial piety is the root of all virtue and the source of all instructions.[263] Nam argues that according to *Hyo*, "There is

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[259] Sung Chul Kim, *New Year's Interview with the Renowned Professor Toynbee: The Light of Peace, East Asia* (*Donga-Ilbo* Newspaper, Jan. 1, 1973), political section, 5. https://www.donga.com/archive/newslibrary/view?ymd=19730101.

[260] InSoo Son also quoted Toynbee's Korean filial piety in his book, *Korean Culture of Filial Piety* (한국인의 효도문화) (Seoul: Moon Eum Sa 도서출판 문음사, 1997), 488.

[261] Translation of Korean to English is mine: 마음이 가는 곳에 몸이 따라 간다 (*ma eumi ga neu gose momi Ttara ganda),* as well as transliteration in English.

[262] Eun Chul Kim, *The Fulfilment of Filial Piety: The Development of Korean Protestantism and the Shape of a Theology of Filial Piety* (Scotland: University of St. Andrews, 2001), 69. The Book of Filial Piety is called *HyoKyung* (효경 孝經).

[263] Ibid. Kim quotes Confucius filial piety through *Hyo Kyung*. *Hyo Kyung* is the book teaching the way of practicing *Hyo* (filial piety in Korean) written by Confucius.

nothing greater than filial piety among human deeds since parents stand next to god [the divine or God].”[264] As such, it serves as a foundational root of all actions and contributes greatly to the development of one's character and personal growth.

The Chinese character[265] 孝 (filial piety 효) is composed of three Chinese letters: 土 (soil, fields) + 丿(plow) +子 (son, child) that may illustrate the notion that in an agricultural society, elderly parents who have worked tirelessly, are supported by their child. Just as parents carried their young children on their backs, this could show that as parents age, children should be responsible for supporting them and so to speak, carrying them on their backs in return.[266] The character may also be understood as a composition of the letter of “old” (늙을 로 老) and that of “a son” or “a child” (아들 子).[267] It portrays the image of a son carrying an elderly person on his back.[268] It essentially shows young persons to be grateful for the care and love received from their parents and reciprocally to care for and support their parents in old age.

3.2.1 Beginning of Filial Piety Realized in the Physical Well-Being of the Child

[264] Nam Ok Yoon, *Hyo as Incarnation Spirituality* (화육적 영성으로서의 효), The Korean Hyo Studies Association: Journal of Korean Hyo Studies, Vol 7. Aug. 2008, 87.

[265] *Hanja* is the ideogram which means each single character stands for a single concept or common meaning. *Hanja* is Chinese characters, and Koreans adopted Chinese characters in the past and was used as Korea’s writing system. It was the sole means of writing in Korea. All official documents and written communication were written by using Chinese characters. But King Sejong created the Korean alphabet, known as *Hangul*, in AD 1446. *Hangul* has enabled Korean general population to read and write. Korean Chinese characters have slowly been replaced by *Hangul* as a means of writing the Korean language.

[266] Cha, *The Traditional Thoughts of Korean,* 24.

[267] Ibid.

[268] Abraham Park, *The Ten Commandment: The Eternal Covenant for All Generations* (UK: CLC Trust, 2022), 356. The character 孝 depicts the act of a child soothing and comforting their aged parent by carrying them on their back, as they were once carried by their parent when they were young.

In traditional Korean culture, the relationship between parents and their children began with specific prenatal care.[269] The pregnant woman had a unique set of prenatal beliefs and practices to follow during pregnancy called *Taekyo* (태교 胎教).[270] According to *Taekyo Singi* (태교신기 胎教新記), "Human nature is rooted in heaven, and temperament is inherited from parents. Thus, if one's temperament deviates, it will cover up their true nature."[271] ("인간의 본성은 하늘에 근본하고 기질은 부모에게서 받으니 기질이 치우치면 본성을 덮어버리게 된다.") The purpose of prenatal education was to develop the good character of the baby.[272] The pregnant woman believed that her behavior impacted a fetus: *Taekyo* sought to create the best environment for the fetus' physical and emotional development as well as healthy growth.[273] Mothers attempted to hear only good news, see beautiful things, and think the right things in order to ensure the optimal environment for the baby in her womb. It was thought that they would give birth to a good girl or a boy as a result of practicing *Taekyo*. As such, many Korean parents desired to

[269] Kyoung-Eun Lee, *Korean Immigrant Women's Taekyo Practices in the United States as a Traditional Prenatal Self-Care*, Korean J. Women Health Nurse (여성건강 간호 학회지), 2015; 21 (3):241-51, 242.

[270] Ibid., Prenatal care started as soon as a pregnant woman noticed her conception. Lee notes: "Once a Korean woman has conceived, she is supposed to follow *Taekyo* that includes various prenatal care rituals and behavioral taboos. *Taekyo* is a set of traditional prenatal self-care which originally starts from being prepared as a parent even before the conception. In observing *Taekyo*, a pregnant woman is to appreciate beautiful things in life and avoid certain taboos. From *Taekyo*, she is told that if she manages unclean things or kills a living creature, difficult childbirth or other misfortunes in the family may occur. In the past, most Korean women were forced to strictly follow the *Taekyo* rituals and taboo." In a recent study, Lee figured out in her survey that 92.2% of participated Korean women still thought it was important to follow *Taekyo* during their pregnancy despite that the modality of rituals and taboos may be different.

[271] Yangwan Jung, *Taekyo Singi ae Daehayo: Bae Anui Agirul garuchinun Taekyoae dahan gul* (태교신기에 대하여: 배안의 아기를 가르치는 태교에 대한 새로운 글) *Sae Kukeo SaengWhal* (새국어 생활) Jae 10 Kwon; 3 ho, 8 월 2000 년. 81. *On the Topic of Prenatal Education: A New Article on Prenatal Education for Teaching Babies in the Womb*, New Korean Life, 10:3 (Aug. 2000), 81. Translation of Korean into English is mine.

[272] Ibid.

[273] Lee, *Korean Immigrant Women's Taekyo Practices in the United States as a Traditional Prenatal Self-Care*, 242. Compared to the Western culture that imposes the meaning of life after birth, in Korean aging system, a baby becomes one year old at birth because the baby's life began at the moment of conception in mother's womb.

transmit the beneficial effects of this traditional *Taekyo* practice to their children when they become pregnant.

In ancient Korea, children were required to take care of their own physical well-being. Yi-Yi (이이), a Confucian scholar in the *Chosun* dynasty (AD 1536 – 1584), claimed that children received their bodies from their parents. For that reason, they should care for their bodies well.[274] Similarly, *The Book of the Filial Piety*[275] states that the children's body, hair, and flesh were given by their parents, and therefore the children should protect their own body just as if it was the body of their parents.[276] That is to say, filial piety is rooted in caring for one's own body since it was inherited or gifted from the parents. Parents considered that the child was an extension of the body of the parents. As a result, Korean parents in antiquity stressed that children should avoid dangerous situations that could threaten their bodies.[277]

When a child cared for and honored his or her own body, they were simultaneously caring for the well-being of their parent's heart, for what hurts a parent more is when harm comes to their child. *Perhaps it is in part this communal, foundational Korean core value of filial piety that often comes into conflict with the concept of individualism*.

However, when a nation was in crisis based on ancient documents, most filial sons went out to battle and fought for the nation. Therefore, traditional Korean filial piety was intertwined with loyal devotion to kingship. The book, *Samguk Yusa*[278] records that: "If filial piety extends to

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[274] Cha, *Traditional Thoughts of Korean,* 27.

[275] The book of the Filial Piety is called *Hyo Kyung* in Korean, 효경 and 孝經 in Chinese. And its transliteration in English is "S*in Che Bal Bu Su Zi Bu Mo"* (신체발부 수지 부모 身体膚受之父母).

[276] Cha, *Traditional Thoughts of Korean,* 24. Cha quotes Confucius, *Analects,* BK, Ch. 6.

[277] Ibid.

[278] *Samguk Yusa* (삼국유사 三國遺事) was compiled by the Buddhist monk *Ilyeon* (AD 1206 -1289) in 1281; see also, Koog P. Hong, *Abraham, Our Father, the Father of All: A Perspective from Ancient Korean History Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 43 (3) (2019): 371-84, 376. Hong notes: "Despite its title (*Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms*), *Samguk Yusa* does not begin its history with the three kingdoms. It begins with an account of *Dangun*, tracing the history of Korea back to the prehistorical era. This story functions as a preface to the history

the nation, it leads to loyal piety for the nation."[279] Throughout Korean history, filial piety and loyal piety served as two pillars supporting the nation. In other words, those who practiced filial piety were also loyal to the country's defense against foreign attacks, whether as a soldier or a scholar.[280] For example, Yi-Yi in the *Chosun* Dynasty brought honor to the country not as a warrior, but as a great scholar who faithfully practiced filial piety. [281]

3.2.2 Practicing Traditional Filial Piety

The practicing of traditional Korean filial piety remained virtually unchanged throughout history. It emphasized the importance of sincere behavior and care of the children when serving their parents. This was made possible primarily through the child gaining an understanding of the heart/mind of his or her parent within a loving relationship. The care of parents was sincere when it was based on genuine love. The practice of considering one's parents' mind is found in ancient Korean texts that pre-date Confucianism.[282]

The first Korean exposure to Confucianism is usually dated to the second century BCE when Han China set up four commanderies in the Korean peninsula.[283] The Confucian precepts gradually came to dominate and regulate every aspect of people's lives. It is known that one day

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of the three kingdoms that follow." Most Korean people consider they are the descendants of *Dangun*, for their origin; Young Ick Lew, *Brief History of Korea* (New York: The Korea Society, 2000), 6. Lew notes: "Ancient *Chosun*, the first Korean state was organized in 2333 BCE by the national progenitor, *Dangun*. While The *Dangun* legend remains a popular element of North and South Korean mythology, anthropological findings show that Korea's earliest political entities, styled walled town-states or chiefdoms, evolved during the Bronze Age from about the eleventh century BCE. Further political progress was a consequence of the introduction of iron from China in the fifth century BCE."

[279] Cha, *Traditional Thoughts of Korean* (한국인의 전통사상), 53. Translation of Korean into English is mine. It records: "爾生惟親 親降自天 惟敬爾親 乃克敬天 以及于邦國 是乃忠孝 爾克体是道 天有崩 必先脫免"효가 나라안에 미치면 곧 충이다.

[280] Out of many heroes who saved the Korean country from foreign attacks, the story of Admiral Sun-sin Yi (Lee, 이순신 장군) exemplifies this bond. Yi (이) is pronounced similar to Lee based on Korean transliteration.

[281] Cha, *Traditional Thoughts of Korean* (한국인의 전통사상), 55.

[282] Ibid.

[283] Jaeyeon Lucy Chung, *Korean Women, Self-Esteem, and Practical Theology: Transformative Care* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing AG, 2017), 42. Chung notes: "Confucianism has affected all aspects of life, including the political and social structures, cultural systems, principles of relationship, and self-image. It has done so through its unique thought and relational patterns based on filial piety and harmony."

Confucius discussed filial piety with his disciples, "Filial piety today is taken to mean providing nourishment for parents, but even dogs and horses are provided with nourishment. If it is not done with reverence for parents, what's the difference between men and animals?"[284] It means that material support alone cannot define filial piety. He highlighted the importance of the child's sincere heart over how well they were able to provide physical needs such as food and clothing for their parents.[285] The essence of Confucian philosophy on filial piety lies in a love-based form of filial piety.[286] Song stressed Confucius' idea that parents should seek a reciprocal relationship of love with their children, rather than demanding unilateral obedience as well.[287]

Influenced by Confucianism, *SamGang Haeng Sil Doe* (삼강행실도),[288] which is an ancient document that deals with the moral quality of filial sons (*HyoJa* 효자 孝子), loyal subjects (*ChungShin* 충신 忠臣) and devoted women (*Yeulyo* 열녀 烈女) whose actions best represented the ethical nature of the three fundamental human relations that sustained Confucian society: Father-son, ruler-subject, and husband-wife.[289]

Among these relationships, especially, the father-son (parent-child) relationship was emphasized as the central theme in Confucianism.[290] As a central aspect of filial piety, the

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[284] Kyu-Taik Sung: *An Exploration of Actions of Filial Piety*, Journal of Aging Studies, 12(4), 1998, 369-86, 371. Sung quotes Confucius from the *Analects*, BK. 2, Chapter. 7.

[285] Chi Yeoul Song, *A Study on the Inheritance of the Throne by the HYO System in the Early Choun Dynasty* (Korean Hyo Studies Association: Journal of Korean Hyo Studies, Vol 7., (Aug. 2008), 181.

[286] Ibid.

[287] Ibid.

[288] This book has one hundred and ten good examples of filial sons, loyal subjects, and virtuous wives, containing twenty-four Chinese filial stories, which explained in Chinese characters on top and below in the Hangul (Korean letter). In King Sejong Memorial Society, *King Sejong the Great: A Biography of Korean's Most Famous King* (Seoul: King Sejong Memorial Society, 1970), 73-74.

[289] Young Kyun Oh, *Engraving Virtue: The Printing History of a Premodern Korean Moral Primer* (Brill, 2013), 2. *Samgang Haeng Sil-Doe* was printed in 1434 by the court under King Sejong's mandate for morality primer and an aid in the ethical transformation of his people.

[290] Ibid. In Confucian ethics, there is a fundamental assumption of hierarchical relationships, where men are considered superior to women, and the elderly are esteemed above the young. These roles assigned to different individuals create a sense of duty and order within human relationships. Under this framework, humanity is

relationship between father and son has affection and mutual love rather than one-way obedience. The emphasis on honoring and caring for parents can foster a sense of gratitude, respect, and interconnectedness within families. It recognizes the contributions and sacrifices that parents have made for their children and encourages reciprocal care in later life.

SamGang HaengSil Doe (삼강행실도 三綱行實圖) classified the practice of filial piety into five ways.

> Firstly, there is "*Bongyang* (봉양)," which involves providing parents with their material needs such as clothing, food, and shelter. Secondly, "*Yangji* (양지)" focuses on reading parents' emotions and fulfilling their spiritual needs. Understanding their hearts and comforting them is of utmost importance, as it is considered a way of serving God. Additionally, children should refrain from sharing distressing stories with their parents in order to prevent them from worrying. Obedience to parents' words is also emphasized. The third category is "*Yangchin* (양친)," which encompasses all actions taken to protect and support parents in times of emergencies, such as natural disasters or accidents. The fourth "*Uichin* (의친)" involves the comprehensive care of parents' health at all times. When parents fall ill, children are responsible for tending to their needs and ensuring their well-being. Lastly, "*Sangchin* (상친)" pertains to the funeral process and the ongoing maintenance of parents' graves, protecting them from the attack of animals.[291]

Moreover, ancient Koreans viewed death as a continuation and transformation of life.[292] Children were educated to continue filial piety towards their parents after death which included observing funeral rites and performing memorial services.[293] As such, sending off the deceased with proper respect and care was considered a significant duty when serving one's parents.[294]

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expected to fulfill its respective functions, striving for a harmonious balance of hierarchical yet interdependent connections, where those in lower positions submit to those in higher positions, while the higher individuals administer and guide the lower ones.

[291] Myung-ok Lim, *A Study on Filial Piety in Dongguk Sinsok SamGang Haeng Sil Doe* (동국신속삼강행실도에 나타난 효사례고찰), Korean Chinese Literature Vol. 22, (1983), 219.

[292] Hong Rul Yoo, *Loyalty and filial piety in Korean history* (한국사에 나타난 충효사상) (Seoul: Korean Education and Culture Research Institute 대한 교육 문화 연구소, 1977), 105-106.

[293] Yi-Yi, *격몽요결 (格蒙要解)* (*KyuckMong YoGueol*) (Seoul: Olje Classics, 2014) trans. Hwoo Su Jungng, 156.

[294] Ibid.

> On the day of their parents' passing, the children wore mourning attire [white linen] and refrained from eating delicious food. They ate porridge or coarse rice … They continued to mourn and even delegated the task of mourning to servants when they became too weak… After burying their parents, they observed a three-year mourning period during which they refrained from engaging in any work and avoided socializing with others… Consequently, those who did not perform ancestral rites were considered to be failing in their filial duty… During ancestral rites, they would treat the occasion as if they were meeting their departed parents, and they would prepare elaborate offerings that included their parents' favorite food... Typically, the eldest son would perform the ancestral rites.[295]

They believed that ancestral rites could make the deceased return to the present world after death as a spirit.[296] The ancestral rites were performed by the eldest son's family with relatives and neighborhood.[297] As such, filial piety encompasses reading parents' minds sincerely, having compassion upon them, protecting them, supporting them physically and financially, doing difficult and urgent tasks for them, following religious rituals for them, and taking care of the deceased as well as their ancestors.

As a renowned scholar who practiced filial piety, Yi-Yi taught the youth to practice filial piety through principles such as loyalty, respect, virtuous conduct, and ancestral rituals.[298] His book, "격몽요결 (格蒙要解)" (*KyuckMong YoGueol*: The Essence of the Classic of Filial Piety), supported that in the parent-child relationship, children should listen attentively to their parents' words, provide material support, comfort their parents' hearts, and perform ancestral rituals after their parents passed away. He also stressed a sincere attitude in serving parents:

> Every morning, before daybreak, one should rise, wash their face, comb their hair, get dressed, tie their belt, and then approach their parents' sleeping room. The

[295] Ibid. 120, 124, 135, 142, 146, 152.

[296] Cha, *Traditional Thoughts of Korean* (한국인의 전통사상), 24.

[297] Ibid.

[298] Yi-Yi, *격몽요결 (格蒙要解)*, 91. He defined the concept of learning and taught the fundamental etiquette in human relationships. This book served as a basic textbook for teaching ethics and character to little kids to be good people in the *Chosun* Dynasty. According to him, learning goes beyond mere academic studies. It encompasses the daily practice of loving one's children as a father, fulfilling filial duties as a child, displaying loyalty as a subject, demonstrating discernment as a spouse, cultivating brotherly love, respecting elders as a young person, and upholding righteousness among friends.

> child should lower their breath and speak softly, inquiring about the warmth or coldness of the room, whether the sleeping place is comfortable or not. In the dark hours, one should go there again and arrange the bedding, checking if it is warm or cool. When attending to them during the day, one should always have a gentle countenance and pleasant countenance, respectfully responding and serving them. When caring for them by their side, one should do so with utmost sincerity. When going outside or returning home, it is necessary to bow, express their words, bow again, and then greet them.[299]

Yi-Yi hoped that by instilling the habit of honoring parents in children day-by-day, they would then become good people who consider others in all relationships. He emphasized children's providing nourishment and supporting their parents because they might miss the opportunity to do so. As children observed these practices well, they were rewarded by the king of the state and were recognized officially as good sons or daughters or daughters-in-law.[300] For their good filial piety, the state provided rice and clothes to them. In order to encourage other people, the state also erected a stele around the house of the good sons and daughters who practiced filial piety.

3.2.3 Traditional Korean Parent-Child Relationship

The traditional family structure and values of Korea were formed by ethical teachings and agriculture.[301] Ethical teachings were influenced by the state religion.[302] In an agricultural

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[299] Ibid. Translation of Korean into English mine: "날마다 밝기 전에 일어나서 세수하고 머리 빗고 옷을 입고 띠를 띠고서 부모의 잠 자리에 나아가 숨을 낮추고 음성을 부드럽게 하여 방이 따뜻한지 추운지, 자리가 편안한지 그렇지 않은지를 여쭙는다. 날이 어두우면 잠자리에 찾아가 이부자리를 펴드리고 따뜻한지 서늘한지를 살펴본다. 낮 동안 받들어 모실 때는 항상 얼굴빛을 온화하게 하고 태도를 부드럽게 하여 공경하여 응대하고 좌우 곁에서 봉양할때는 그 정성을 극진히 해야 한다. 밖에 나가고 집에 들어올 때는 반드시 절을 하고 말씀 드리고 절한 다음 인사를 여쭙고 뵙는다. 每日未明而起, 盥櫛衣帶, 就父母寢所, 下氣怡聲, 問燠寒安否。昏則詣寢所, 定其褥 席, 察其溫涼。 日間侍奉, 常愉色婉容, 應對恭敬, 左右就養, 極盡其誠。 出入必拜辭 拜謁."

[300] Yi-Yi, *격몽요결 (格蒙要解)* (*KyuckMong YoGueol*), 101.

[301] Taekil Kim, *Hankook Gajokui Gwankae wa Yunjae, Grigo Mirae* (Past, Present, and Future of the Korean Family) Chulhak gwa Hyunsil (Philosophy and Reality), 55 (Winter 2002), 31.

[302] Boye Lafayette De Mente, *The Korean Mind: Understanding Contemporary Korean Culture* (HK: Tuttle Publishing, 2017), 153. As a national religion, Shamanism influenced the Old *Chosun;* Buddhism during the Three Kingdoms as well as the period of the *United Silla* and the *Goguryeo* dynasty, Confucianism during the *Chosun* dynasty, and Christianity during the modern time. De Mente explains that early Koreans offered prayers to the god of the land and harvests before god alters. These alters eventually evolved into shrines where shamanist rituals were conducted. [For that reason, the religion in the time of *Dangun*, Shamanism or Totemism dominated.]

society, the collaboration of all family members was crucial.[303] Agriculture, being a labor-intensive endeavor, necessitated the assurance of a sufficient workforce, which led to a preference for the extended family system. As a result, the custom of early marriage and encouragement of childbirth at a young age emerged, aiming to increase labor resources. [304] Within the household, the eldest son, under the framework of ancestral rites and family rituals, assumed responsibility for conducting ancestral ceremonies and managing family affairs. In a patriarchal society, the authority of the family was bestowed on the father or grandfather or the firstborn male.[305] Parents educated children on how to practice filial piety and how to be obedient to their elders.[306] For this reason, those who failed to uphold the instruction of their parents and elders brought shame upon themselves and their families.

"*Samgang Oryun*"[307] deals with three virtues and five major human relationships that people should uphold as moral principles.[308] Among them, "*Bu Ja Yu Chin (*부자 유친 父子有親)" emphasizes the importance of a good relationship between parents and children.[309] Confucius considered it the most exemplary framework for the basic structure of the five relationships.[310] It

[303] Kwankyu Lee, *Hankook Gajokui Sa-Whae Ilyuhak* (Social Anthropology of the Koran Family) (Seoul: Jipmoondang Publishing Co., 1998). 52. He notes that cultivating rice demanded extensive labor, including water preservation, transplanting seedlings, and harvesting during a limited time. Accordingly, the relationship within the family was significant for cooperation.

[304] Ibid.

[305] Cha, *Traditional Thoughts of Korean* (한국인의 전통사상), 27.

[306] Ibid.

[307] Chung, *Korean Women, Self-Esteem, and Practical Theology*, 44. Chung notes, "*Sam Kang O Ryun* (삼강오륜 三綱五倫 Three Bonds and Five Relationships) is the relational and social ethic and has been the core of the movement to transform the family and society. The first textual evidence of China, almost four centuries after Mencius advocated the virtues of Five Relationships according to Wei-Ming Tu. The three bonds are described as such: "The minister serves the king, the son serves the father, and the wife serves the husband. If the three are followed, the world will be in peace; if the three are violated, the world will be in chaos."

[308] Eun-sook Park, Eun-Gyeong Kim, Jeong-wan Won, Wonok Oh, Minhyeon Seok, and Yeojin Lim, *Parent-Child Relations in Traditional Korean Society Seen through the Classical Literature,* Journal of Child Nursing, 2002; 8(4): 469-81, 469. The Confucian terms referring to ethical principles and practices that should be upheld between the king and his subjects, parents and children, husband and wife, adults and children, and among friends.

[309] Ibid.

[310] Ibid.

is called *Cheonryun* (천륜 天倫) which means the relationship can never be split. As such, a parent-child relationship is a universal principle that transcends time and has been upheld for generations. Children were viewed as divine gifts, bestowed either by heaven or ancestors.[311] The birth of a child was seen as an event that resonated with the ancestors and symbolized the reincarnation of a cherished being from the celestial realm into human form.[312] This belief was heavily influenced by Buddhism. Particularly, the birth of a male child carried immense significance since he would become an heir to carry on the family lineage, honoring the legacy of the ancestors and fostering further growth of the family. Traditionally, respect for the blood lineage concept was tied to status consciousness and has been reinforced through ancestor worship. The written genealogies (*Jock Bo* 족보) or ancestral group charts have been preserved well for passing down the family name. Consequently, there was a strong preference for male children. The parent-child relationship was viewed as hierarchical, as was the sibling order, with the oldest son having authority over the younger.

The birth of a daughter, on the other hand, was also cherished by parents, but often brought sorrow to her parents, leading women to go to great lengths in their attempts to conceive a son. [313] Chung argues that women could not under any circumstances initiate divorce.[314] Thus, if she had no son, various methods, such as using amulets or even seeking surrogacy, were

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[311] Ibid., 474.

[312] Ibid.

[313] Ibid.

[314] Chung, *Korean Women, Self-Esteem, and Practical Theology*, 47. According to Chung, women's life cycles were divided into three stages in relation to male counterparts. Before marriage, a woman was to obey her father; after marriage, her husband; and in old age, her son. Chung goes on to say: "The ideology of *Jeong Jeol* (정절) or virginity and chastity, was reinforced by Chosun society in order to suppress all women and protect the privilege of the existing ruling class; see also Park *et al*., argue in their work, *Parent-Child Relations in Traditional Korean Society Seen through the Classical Literature*, that they could be divorced by any one of the seven legitimate grounds called *Chil Geo Gi Ahk* (칠거지악). A woman could be divorced at any time if (1) she did not serve her parents-in-laws well; (2) if she had no children, particularly a male child; (3) she was unfaithful to her husband; (4) she was jealous: (5) she had an incurable disease; (6) she was talkative; or (7) she was found to be a thief. (475).

employed to ensure the birth of a male child. For a mother, her son became the very purpose of her existence as she had fulfilled her duty to carry on the family name through him. She probably felt some relief from the burden to inherit the family line. For this reason, infertility was considered a grave misfortune and a great failing for a woman.[315]

In summary, we explored the founding ideology, *HongIk-InGan,* the concept of filial piety, and the parent-child relationship in ancient times. The founding ideology, *HongIk-InGan* entails both honoring parents and heaven, and is foundational for the children's practice of *Hyo*. Thus, honoring parents includes obeying the deity's command. The act of sincerely honoring one's parents was regarded as a form of reverence towards the divine in heaven. *Hyo* is the practice of filial respect and care to parents, which is the duty and obligation of children. It is a fundamental virtue that provides guidance for parents and children. *Hyo*, the traditional Korean concept of filial piety begins with keeping children's bodies safe. As life progresses, filial piety is extended to the elderly parents and continues even after death. Korean parent-child relationship is hierarchical, with respect due to elders. The birth of a child, especially a male, was highly valued due to the huge significance for continuing the family lineage.

The practice of filial piety emphasizes a sincere mindset toward parents, and the love-based relationship between parents and children. It includes providing material and emotional support, protecting and supporting parents in times of need, caring for their health, participating in the funeral process, and maintaining post-mortem ancestral rites. The practice of filial piety was highly esteemed and rewarded by the state, with good children receiving official recognition and support. For Koreans, practicing filial piety was not a command given by humans but rather a divine principle. It consistently emphasized the importance of practicing filial piety,

[315] Ibid.

incorporating it into ethics, family values, and social harmony. As such, for children, honoring their parents is significant.

3.3 Filial Piety in Each State Religion

Don Baker maintains that Korean people are highly spiritual and religious.[316] He writes that Korean kingdoms "cultivat[ed] the sort of moral character that will ensure that people behave the way they should according to various religions."[317] Down through the ages of Korean history, a kingdom would collapse and be replaced by a new one. Each succeeding kingdom had its own religion such as Shamanism, Buddhism, and Confucianism as a national ideology. They all included the concept of filial piety that was impacted by their religion. While the practice and principles of filial piety varied, each religion consistently emphasized its importance. Confucianism continues to influence modern Korean culture and the practice of filial piety today.

In this section, we will explore the influence of Shamanism and Buddhism on the practice of Hyo and how these religions contribute to Confucianism filial piety. Shamanism, as a national religion, was very influential in the *Old Chosun* (2333 - 194 BC).[318] Throughout the years, Shamanism, Buddhism, and Taoism dominated each state, however, Confucianism, though not a religion, and Taoism had been introduced from China and their principles applied to lifestyle philosophies and ethical practices. [319] The comprehensive establishment of Confucian thought and systems in Korea began with *Goguryeo*, *Paekche*, and *Silla's* development as ancient kingdoms. Cawley argues that followers of Buddhism also adhered to Taoism and Confucian

[316] Don Baker, *Korean Spirituality* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 1. According to him, for spirituality, salvation is not the only goal of religious activity in Korea, but also the seeking of self-perfection (5).

[317] Ibid.

[318] De Mente, *Korean Mind*, 153. *Go* means Old in Chinese character meaning, so *GoChosun* or *Old Chosun* is the same meaning by different name.

[319] Kevin N. Cawley, *Religious and Philosophical Traditions of Korea* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 19.

social ideals and rituals, praying to Taoist deities, which could include the Buddha. They could consult a shaman depending on their individual or family needs.[320]

3.3.1 Filial Piety in Shamanism

Ancient literature about the relationship between indigenous Korean shamanism and the practice of filial piety is rare. However, among the existing sources, the *HongIk-InGan* ideology in *the Samguk Yusa* emphasizes the importance of respecting and honoring parents based on its foundational principles for the establishment of the nation. The *Samguk Yusa* writes that when *Hwanung* was sent down to the earth, he obeyed his father, *Hwannin*'s command to practice the ideology of *HongIk-InGan*. *Dangun Wangum* saw his father's obedience, Hwanung, to benefit humanity and stressed children's obedience to their parents.[321] As such, he instilled the values of filial obedience and reverence toward parents among the people. The fact that the first king who established Korea obeyed the command of the Heavenly King demonstrates the obedience inherent in the spirit of Korean filial piety.

Moreover, the *Old Chosun (Gochosun)* society was tribal and patriarchal, focusing on agricultural life that requires the cooperation of the entire family and community. [322] Some scholars argue that *Gochosun* adapted Shamanism to seek people's well-being for an agricultural society.[323] In terms of communal life, the role of the Shaman was significant.[324] The Shaman was the central figure of Shamanism in conducting the rituals.[325] People believed that shamans'

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[320] Ibid.

[321] Kim, *A Study on the Idea of Filial Piety Inherent in ChamJeon Ge Myeon* (참전계명), 223-27.

[322] James H Grayson, *Korea: A Religious History* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2013), 19.

[323] Ibid.

[324] Ki Keun Jang and Kap Hun Kwon, *MyungShim Bo Gam* [명심보감] (Seoul: Myungmoondang [명문당]:2017), 64.

[325] Kim, *Fulfillment of Filial Piety*, 13. The rituals consisted mainly of dancing, singing, and performances which were called *gut* (굿). The goal of performing of *gut* was to bring fortune, pray for the healing of an illness, a community's well-being, and abundant harvest.

rituals such as *gut*[326] were very important for keeping safety and well-being in their lives. Others maintain that *Gochosun* introduced *Chun Do Kyo* (천도교),[327] thus *Dangun Wangum* was regarded as a priest who held religious-political leadership.[328] Looked upon as a messenger between the spirit world and the material world, he was a mediator for his people, the first theocratic ruler.[329] Grayson argues that the king ruled by divine justice could intercede with *Hanullim* (the Lord of Heaven) for his people's well-being and blessing.[330] As a result, shamanism came to be accepted as aligning with the Confucian principle of filial piety, emphasizing obedience to the principles of Heaven.

3.3.2. Filial Piety in Buddhism

Buddhism played a critical role in establishing the social and spiritual foundations for the development of each of the Three Kingdoms into organized states. Eventually, it became the main religion favored by the aristocracy with government support (AD 371 – 1392).[331] The emergence of Buddhism brought a new aspect to religious beliefs and practices. In Buddhism, filial piety is considered an important virtue, and in addition, its concept extends beyond one's own parents to respect all living people and living things.[332] *The Book of Parental Grace and Filial Piety*[333] emphasizes children's honoring parents in light of their grace and love while

[326] People believed that through *Gut,* a Shaman removed evil power such as an evil ghosts and healed people.

[327] *Chun Do Gyo* is the religion of Celestial Way.

[328] Dongshik Yu, *The Christian Faith Encounters the Religious of Korea* (Seoul: Christian Literature Society, 1965), 15.

[329] Peter H. Lee, *A History of Korean Literature* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 56.

[330] Grayson, *Korea,* 19, 23. *Hanullim* is God who is in heaven, *Chon shin* is God who is in heaven or sky in Korean. Grayson argues that the Shamanistic influence may be seen in the indigenous belief in a supreme, heavenly spirit called *Hanullim* (**하늘님** 上帝**),** the Lord of Heaven or *Ch'on shin* (**천신** 天神) in Korean in the body of heavenly spirits which carry out his will.

[331] Peter. H. Lee, *Sourcebook of Korean Civilizations,* Vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 63.

[332] Cha, *Traditional Thoughts of Korean*, 59.

[333] "부모은 중경" in Korean, and its transliteration is *Bumoeun JoongKyung.*

raising them. It suggests ten graces exhibited by parents that result in the practice of filial piety in their children. These include:

1) The grace of conception and protection while in the womb for 10 months.
2) The grace of enduring pain during childbirth.
3) The grace of forgetting the pain of near-death after giving birth.
4) The grace of feeding a child by swallowing bitter things and spitting out sweet things.
5) The grace of a mother sleeping on a wet bed and a child being embraced on a dry bed.
6) The grace of nurturing by breastfeeding and upbringing.
7) The grace of washing away impurities such as urine and feces without hesitating.
8) The grace of worrying when the child goes on a long journey.
9) The grace of enduring any hardships for the sake of the child's well-being.
10) The grace of having compassion for one's child in the end.[334]

These common-place parental activities were viewed not as something a child is due, but rather as sacrificial expressions of grace and love of parents, particularly the mother, toward their children. As the child sees that parenting is actually acts of love, they learn to reciprocate with actions of love and gratitude toward their parents.

Although Buddhism was the dominant religion in the state, the Confucian values and practices about honoring one's parents were practiced and perhaps more applicable than those of Buddhism. Buddhism is often associated with the Three Kingdoms period of ancient Korea, while Confucianism is linked to the *Chosun* Dynasty. As we mentioned earlier, Confucianism did not suddenly emerge; the first Korean exposure to Confucianism is dated back to the second century BCE, and thus its philosophical principles were practiced among the people as a code of ethics and were deeply ingrained in their lives. The substantial influence of Confucianism on

[334] Youngi Pae, *Dong SeoYangUi GeolDae GaChi rosseoui HyoEae SaRangui WorlLee (동서양의 절대 가치로서의 효애 사상의 원리* The Principle of Filial Piety and Parental Love as an Absolute Value in both Eastern and Western Culture (The Korean Hyo Studies Association: Journal of Korean Hyo Studies, Vol .7., (Aug. 2008), 153. Translation of Korean into English is mine.

society began as early as the reign of King Sosurim of *Goguryeo* in AD 372 with the establishment of the *Taehak*, an educational institution.

After *Goguryeo*, during the *Silla* Dynasty (57 BC – AD 935), there was a national education institution called "*Gughak,*" where the Confucian classics such as *The Analects* and *The Book of Filial Piety* were taught.[335] These Confucian writings stressed the teachings of loyalty and filial piety. In addition, the *Hwarangdo* institution espoused the philosophy of the Five Moral Principles which is related to Buddhistic teaching.[336] The Five Moral Principles included the idea of loyalty and filial piety as the best spirit, as it was said to be *Sagun Yichung* (사군이충 事君以忠, loyalty to the king) and *Sachin Yihyo* (사친이효 事親以孝, filial piety to parents).[337] As such, even though Buddhist ideology overall prevailed, the principles of filial piety in Buddhism and Confucianism were deeply intertwined with the inherent principles of Confucianism strongly influencing Buddhistic filial piety that was then consistently taught and passed down through the generations.

During the *Goryeo* state (AD 918 - 1392), while Buddhism still remained the main religious status, Confucianism progressively gained influence over other areas as well, including the government organization.[338] Grayson states that Buddhism and Confucianism were seen as

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[335] Byoung Joo Kim, *A Study of Thought of Loyalty and Filial Piety in Three Kingdoms Period with the Focus on the Series of Biographies in the Samguk Sagi*, Journal of Korean Classical Chinese Literature 2010, 53.

[336] Pankaj N. Mohan, *Won'gwang and Chajang in the Formation of Early Silla Buddhism,* ed. Robert E. Buswell, Religions of Korea in Practice (Princeton University Press, 2018), 52. *Hwarang* was a youth organization which was composed of elite young men trained in educational, military, and social aspects in the *Silla* Dynasty. *Wonkwang* (AD 555 - 638) was a prominent monk in the history of the early *Silla* Buddhism era. According to the *Samguk Sagi*, two *Hwarang* (화랑 花郎*)* youths pledged to cultivate virtuous minds and train strong bodies as *Won'gwang* visited their monastery. As he gave the two young men the Five Moral Precepts, the first was to serve the king with loyalty and the Second was to serve one's parents with filial piety. The third was to be faithful to one's friends. The fourth was not to retreat in battle, and the last one was not to kill indiscriminately.

[337] Ibid.

[338] Grayson, *Korea,* 83-84. Grayson notes: "Initially, in the early part of the *Goryeo* Dynasty, there was no fundamental conflict or contradiction between Buddhism and Confucianism. In the reign of King *Kwangjong* (AD 958), he created the state civil-service examination based on the Confucian classics. This made Confucianism spread

complementary to each other even as they addressed different aspects of life. Buddhism was for spiritual education while Confucianism was more concerned with the practice of government. He notes that the Confucian virtue of honoring one's parents was prevalent when Buddhism was the dominant religious mode of the *Goryeo* state (AD 918 - 1392).[339] The eight poems of *Pal Ban Ga*[340] in *MyungShim BoGam*[341] were edited by a civil official. It was used by the government to teach unfilial children how to serve their parents. *Pal Ban Ga* reflects the concept of the Confucian idea of the parental graces that should yield filial piety:

> When your child complains, you take it with delight.
> You enjoy listening to your children even when they speak a thousand words.
> Yet when your parents speak one word, you say they nag much.
> They are not nagging; they are worried about you.
> They speak from many years of experience, so honor the words of the aged, and do not quarrel with them or rebuke them.
>
> While you do not detest your children's feces and urine, you hate the saliva of your aged parents.
> Did not your six-foot body originate from your parents' spirit and blood?
> Your parents spent their youth for you, and now they are old and withered, so serve them well.
>
> The pharmacy down the street sells medicine to fatten [strengthen] your child,
> But they do not have medicine to preserve your parents' health.

among the higher class." Grayson continues to note: "However, towards the end of the G*oryeo* state, Buddhist monks became tainted by corruption due to their increasing wealth and engagement in political matters. Buddhism became closely aligned with royal power, reaching its pinnacle in the socio-political sphere and exerting control over secular affairs. In the late G*oryeo* dynasty (AD 1200 - 1392), the fundamental principles of religious cults, such as chastity and abstinence were violated. Buddhism, having shifted its focus from a religious field to a political engagement, necessitated a primarily political reformation. In 1392, King *Kongyang* was removed from office and General Yi was raised to the throne. He adopted Confucianism as the guiding socio-political ideology to eliminate Buddhism and establish the Confucian Kingdom of *Chosun*" (95-96).

[339] James H. Grayson, *Invading Mongols, and the Preservation of Korean Traditions: The Monk Ilyeon and the "Memorabilia of the Tree Kingdoms*," Folklore, Vol. 128. 1 (March 2017), 1-15. 5.

[340] Park, *Ten Commandments*, 362. Park quotes the *Eight Contrasting Poems* (팔반가 八反歌) from the book of *MyungShim BoGam,* and it consists of eight poems that deal with children's improper attitude toward parents.

[341] Ibid., *MyungShim BoGam* (명심보감) is a book edited by a civil official, *Chujeok,* seven hundred years ago during the *Goryeo* Dynasty ruled by King *Chungryeol* (AD 1274 - 1308). *MyungShim* means "brightening the heart' and *BoGam* means a textbook as "a precious mirror" So, *MyungShim BoGam* means a precious book (textbook) that brightens the heart. Park states that this book explains heavenly providence and encourages its readers to reflect upon themselves and preserve their innate human consciences to develop noble character.

People are eager to heal their child's illness, but they neglect their parents' illnesses.
Even if you cut the flesh off your leg, it is your parent's flesh, so I urge you to preserve your parents' lives quickly.
Having only two parents, many children shun their responsibilities and quarrel over who will take care of their parents.

Having ten children, you accept the whole responsibility of taking care of them all alone.
Your children are full, yet you ask them if they are hungry; your parents are hungry and cold, yet you do not worry about them.
Serve your parents as best as you can; what you eat and wear all came from them in the first place.

You do not remember being indebted to 100 percent of your parents' love for you.
Yet you make known 10 percent of children's filial piety.
Since you are slow to serve your parents but quick to mind your children, who can fathom the love of parents who raise their children!
I urge you not to trust your son's filial piety in vain; remember you are both a parent to your children and a child to your parents.[342]

The filial story of SonSoon and his wife[343] is well known and illustrates the Confucian principles of filial piety in the Buddhistic society as rewarded by the government. It emphasizes

[342] Park, *Ten Commandments*, 363-65. These poems are quoted from Park's book. Park cited from the original book, *MyungShim BoGam.*

[343] Ilyeon, *Samguk Yusa: Legends and History of the Three Kingdoms of Ancient Korea*, trans, Tae-Hung Ha and Grafton K. Mints (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1972), 9-10; see also, Jang and Kwon, *MyungShim BoGam* [명심보감], 468. Translation from Korean into English is mine.

This is the story of Sonsoon and his wife who practiced filial piety in the era of King HeungDuck (AD 777– 836) in *Silla* Dynasty. When *SonSoon* (손순 孫順)'s father died, he and his wife were hired by someone else's house to work and received rice [food] to support their elderly mother. His mother's name is *Uno* (우노 運烏). SonSun had a little child, and every time they served the food to their mother, their child took away their mother's food and ate it. The food was not enough to serve their mother even though they worked hard. One day, SonSun discussed his wife, "We can get the child [again], but we cannot get our mother back. SonSun decided to bury his son to feed his mother and his wife agreed with his filial piety. Then, they carried the child and went to the northern field of Mt. Chwisan (醉山) with heavy hearts and many tears. While digging to bury the child, they found a small bell which was very strange. He and his wife were surprised and puzzled. They hung it on a tree for a while and hit it as a test. [The sound] was soft and lovely. The wife said, "It is probably this child's fortune to have obtained a strange object, so let's not bury him." Her husband had the same thought as her, so they returned home with the child and the bell. As they got home, they hung the bell on a beam, and struct it, and the sound was heard all the way to the palace. When King Heungdeok heard this, he said to his officials, "I hear a strange bell ringing from the western suburbs. Investigate quickly." The king's envoy went to the house, investigated, and reported the facts to the king in detail. The king heard that when SonSun was about to bury his son to feed his mother, a stone bell rose from the ground. After hearing this story, later the king greatly complimented SonSoon and his wife's filial piety and gave them a fine house and fifty bags of rice annually to encourage others to honor their parents. Later, the house was changed into a

the significance of practicing filial piety that ultimately saved both the child and the mother. Moreover, they were rewarded by the state and heaven.[344] In order to encourage the practice of filial piety, that were highly influenced by Confucianism, the king of the state ordered the filial sons and daughters to be rewarded. These stories of filial sons and daughters encouraged them to practice filial piety. The practice of civil reward for filial piety remains. In 1973, the Korean government established the Filial Piety Prize and has still rewarded the practice of Hyo.[345] Filial piety prizes are offered in Korean communities around the world.

3.3.3 Filial Piety in Confucianism

In the *Chosun* Dynasty, kings promoted the practice of filial piety. In terms of traditional Korean filial piety, we typically mean the concept of Confucian filial piety as a whole. Confucianism emphasizes filial piety more than any other religion or philosophy, and its influence extends to modern-day Koreans as well. The Chinese Five Classics, the textbooks of Confucianism, were introduced to Korea in 1122.[346] From its establishment, the *Chosun* Dynasty implemented Confucian philosophy centered around the principles of *Chu Hsi* (the study of proper conduct and rituals)[347] in order to reform both the national policies and the daily lives of people according to the Confucian ideals upheld by the ruling class.[348]

Some Confucian scholars had a vision of a virtuous society, one that would be in harmony with the way of heaven, where peace, prosperity, and human heartedness prevailed.[349]

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temple and it was called *Hong Hyo Sa* (홍효사 弘孝寺) and enshrined a stone bell. During the reign of King Jinseong, bandits from [later] *Paekche* invaded the village, and the bell disappeared, leaving only the temple. The land where the bell was obtained was called *Wanho Ping* (完乎坪).

[344] Still, the house has been preserved in *Kyoung Ju*, which was the capital of *Silla* Dynasty. The author visited the house.

[345] Sung, *Exploration of Actions of Filial Piety*, 369-36, 370.

[346] Charels Allen Clark, *Religious of Old Korea* (Seoul: Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1961), 91.

[347] Cha, *Traditional Thoughts of Korean,* 54.

[348] Ibid.

[349] Seth, *Brief History of Korea*, 57.

The vehicle for fulfilling this vision was the newly established *Chosun* dynasty. Starting at the top with the king and his officials, they developed a set of institutions and values that penetrated deep into Korean society. King Sejong (AD 1397 - 1450) created the Korean alphabet, Hangul, to enlighten the illiterate people and developed movable metal-type printing to write books concerning filial piety.[350] With the advancement of printing technology, the teachings of filial piety made significant progress.[351] King Youngjo (AD 1724 - 1776) initiated his reign by issuing a decree that stressed the significance of filial piety as the fundamental principle of society.[352] He regarded filial piety as the very foundation of the socio-political structure and the standard against which all other deeds were to be evaluated.[353] The ruler's initiative on government policy succeeded in achieving a society infused with Confucian morality regardless of the state religion. So that together, the rulers and the common people were united in carrying out the socio-political mandate of filial piety.

The study of moral knowledge was prized and encouraged. Those who enjoyed a high level of social status were the ones who likewise exhibited high moral standards.[354] Under the influence of Confucian teachings, Korean society has traditionally laid special emphasis on the integrity of household relations, in which the relationship between parents and children assumed top priority.[355]

3.3.4 Filial Piety in Christianity and Its Clash with Ancestor Worship

[350] Kim, *Fulfillment of Filial Piety*, 84. To advance the Confucian concept of filial piety, King Sejong published three books in Korean alphabet. The creation of metal movable type during the *Chosun* Dynasty was a result of technological innovation that began under King *Taejong* (AD 1367 – 1422) and flourished during the reign of King Sejong (AD 1434).

[351] Ibid.

[352] Kyo Hyun Ji, *Han Gookui Hyo Sa Sang* (한국의 효 사상 Korean Concept of Filial Piety) (Seoul: Min Suk Won, 1997), 50.

[353] Ibid., 51.

[354] Ibid., 90.

[355] Sung, *Exploration of Action of Filial Piety*, 372.

Although Korea's culture is rooted deeply in Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shamanism, the introduction to Christianity is quite meaningful in the later formative stages. Christianity was introduced in Korea around 1584 when Seung-hung Lee visited Beijing, China and came into contact with Catholic missionaries.[356] In 1832, a German Jew named Karl Gutzlaff entered Korea bringing the potato and the Chinese Bible.[357] Since the early 1900s, American missionaries have entered Korea to preach the Gospel, and in 1907, there was a spiritual awakening and revival in Pyongyang, North Korea. In 1919, under Japanese colonial reign, Korea received the Gospel from missionaries, leading to a significant transformation and the rise of the independence movement.[358]

However, due to Koreans' deep-rooted Confucian beliefs, some Koreans opposed Christianity, viewing it as contradictory to ancestral worship. The church made efforts to abolish ancestral worship, while government officials argued that Christianity promoted incorrect teachings in matters of filial piety and respect for ancestors.[359] Ancestor worship was one of the primary means of fulfilling one's filial duties in the traditional Korean culture.[360] This included carrying on the wishes of forefathers, concluding their unfinished business, and paving the way for further development of their family.[361] Some scholars argue that ancestral worship is not a religious rite, but the filial duty of children, saying, "Whether in its classical, popular, or modern forms, the cult is first the ritualization of kinship ties, making it inherently a social custom, not a religion."[362] As such, ancestor worship would not be incompatible with Christianity.

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[356] InSoo Kim, *Brief History of the Church in Korea* (Seoul: Presbyterian Church of Korea Press, 2002), 24.

[357] Ibid.

[358] Henry Newton Smith, *A Typology of Chirstian Response to Chinese Ancestor Worship*, Journal of Ecumenical Studies 26(4), (1989), 27-38, 29.

[359] Kim, *Brief History of the Church in Korea*, 24.

[360] David S. Lim, *Contextualizing Ancestor Veneration: A Theological Survey and Practical Steps for Implementation*, International Journal of Frontier Missiology 32 (4), (Dec. 2015), 186.

[361] Ibid.

[362] Smith, *Typology of Christian Response to Chinese Ancestor Worship*, 29.

However, other scholars view ancestor worship as having the essence of religion within its very core.[363] The deceased are honored and provided for as their descendants bow at their graves, leave food for the spirits to eat, and burn incense to fulfill their prayers and offerings.[364] These practices are not seen in biblical filial piety, where there is not a hint of ancestor worship.[365] Ancestors were referred to by the God they worshipped, i.e. "I Am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (Exod. 3:6). It was God, not the ancestors who cared for the people.

While the Korean mindset and attitudes still bear the influence of Confucian ideals, the influence of Christianity has led to a significant decline in the idea of ancestral rites in the practice of proper filial piety.

3.4 Summary

We have explored the essence of Korean filial piety (*Hyo*) which finds its origins in the foundational ideology of *HongIk-InGn,* which aims to benefit all of humanity, beginning with fostering a harmonious parent-child relationship. The spirit of *HongIk-InGan* encompasses both honoring parents and serving heaven. Throughout early Korean literature, the philosophy of *HongIk-InGan* served as a means of practicing filial piety in different eras. Traditional filial piety, which was considered a standard of proper human conduct, placed great emphasis on venerating heaven throughout Korean history. Within the teachings of *Dangun Wangum,* the act of sincerely honoring one's parents is regarded as an expression of reverence towards the divine. As Koreans wholeheartedly exemplified filial piety, this deep sense of devotion extended to

[363] Mary Yeo Carpenter, *Familism and Ancestor Veneration: A Look at Chinese Funeral Rites,* Missiology 24 (4), (Oct. 1996), 503-17, 504. Some people may offer ancestor rites to remember their ancestors.

[364] Park, *Ten Commandments*, 267.

[365] A detailed study of biblical ancestor worship is beyond the scope of this work. See Roni Dorsey, "*Theology in Story: A Theology of Life after Death Embedded within the Old Testament Narratives*" (ThD Dissertation, Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2022), 57-60. She notes that while there is abundant archeological evidence for such things as leaving food at grave sites, this need not indicate ancestor worship. The Bible is more concerned with the living than the dead because it is the text of the Living God.

loyalty to and safeguarding of the nation. The demands for both filial piety and loyal piety were ever-present throughout the country.

In addition, we have examined the notion of filial piety and the parent-child relationship within the context of traditional Korean values. *Hyo* is considered the foundational virtue and the source of all guidance. Its scope extends beyond the parents' lifetime and includes care and respect for both living and deceased parents. In traditional Korean culture, filial piety begins with ensuring the physical well-being of children. Its practice emphasizes sincerity and a love-based bond between parents and children. Understanding parents' hearts is important as well as providing both material and emotional support, safeguarding and assisting parents in times of need, attending to their health, participating in funeral rituals, and upholding ancestral rites. As a result, the practice of filial piety is highly esteemed and rewarded by the state, with dutiful children receiving official recognition and support.

Different religions were embraced as part of the governing ideologies in each era. Each of them was heavily influenced by Confucianism and its moral teachings as were the government and social policies. Ancient Korea emphasized filial piety as an ideology and policy of the nation. The introduction of Christianity to Korea significantly impacted its cultural and religious landscape, challenging traditional practices like Confucian-based ancestral worship. There have been clashes between Christianity and Confucianism, particularly regarding filial piety and ancestral rites. However, the Confucian ancestral rituals are gradually fading out from the practice of filial piety.

Koreans still carry the characteristics of Shamanism, Buddhism, and especially Confucianism in their lives. There are many similarities between biblical filial piety and the Korean traditional practice of filial piety, such as reciprocal respect, service, honor of elders,

love and care for children, and teaching of morality. However, biblical filial piety focuses more on the living than the dead ancestors because it deals with the Living God.

Having discussed the deep historical roots of Korean filial piety, we shall now observe how Korean American children perceive the principle of filial piety and the challenges of practicing it in the United States.

CHAPTER 4

The Current Perception and Practice of Korean Filial Piety in the United States

4.0 Introduction

We have seen that the parent-child relationship is significant in forming the foundation of familial bonds and social solidarity in both Eastern and Western cultures. Filial piety,[366] with its Confucian values, remains a central moral principle for Korean immigrants. However, scholars have noted that Confucian traditions concerning the family conflict with the values of American society among Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, Japanese, and Taiwanese immigrants.[367] The principle of filial piety is based on a concept of the self and the family that is quite different from that of most Americans. In the Confucian tradition, individuals are interconnected within a hierarchical family structure, unlike the emphasis on individual autonomy in America. Unlike most Americans, Confucian principles stress the importance of familial obligations over individual independence for the sake of family harmony.[368] Taiwanese immigrants emphasize filial piety as a moral principle to keep family solidarity.[369] Like Asian parents, Korean parents greatly value strong attachment among their family members as well.

As Korean immigrants arrived and settled in the United States, they soon became aware of the difficulties inherent in maintaining their family traditions in the Western, individualistic culture. This is not unique to Korean immigrants. Immigrants from Asia also claim that the high

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[366] Hereafter, filial piety encompasses both the Confucian concept of honoring one's parents and the biblical concept of filial piety. Although biblical filial piety is honoring the Lord God through honoring one's parents, the practical methods of practicing filial piety in Confucianism are similar.

[367] Carolyn Chen, *From Filial Piety to Religious Piety: Evangelical Christianity Reconstructing Taiwanese Immigrant Families in the United States,* International Immigration Review 40:3 (Fall, 2006), 573-622. Esp. 574.

[368] Ibid., 579.

[369] Ibid., 580. Chen quotes a Taiwanese's immigrant that children in the United States have too much freedom and consequently are disobedient and disrespectful. She figured out that Taiwanese practices of parenting that are based on Confucian notions of filial obligation are no longer effective on the Taiwanese American children.

rate of family problems in America such as divorce, marital affairs, and runaway children stem from the individualistic society.[370] Chen argues that some Chinese and Taiwanese immigrant parents perceive family problems as stemming from what they see as immodest clothing and behavior, a consumer-oriented culture promoted by the media, relaxed sexual standards, family breakdown, diminished respect for authority and elders, and concerns about issues like guns, gangs, and drugs in American society.[371] That is not to say that these issues do not occur in their home countries as well, but that they are more prevalent in this country. It is important to note that these are general perceptions and not necessarily reflective of the experiences of all immigrants from Asia in the United States. Many factors can influence family dynamics, including individual choices, socioeconomic status, and personal values.

It is interesting to note that in order to solve the intergenerational tensions that arose in immigrant families, many Koreans as well as other Asian families converted to Christianity as a means of shaping their children's moral upbringing.[372] Evangelical Christianity may be seen as promoting practices that foster open communication and sharing within the parent-child relationship, and filial piety is not rejected but preserved in essence. The individual is subordinate, not to the family collectivity, but to the authority of God.[373]

In this chapter, we will explore the Korean American adult children's perception and practice of filial piety in the U.S. This will include the history of Korean immigration, the issues that Korean American families encountered in their lives in America, and the many challenges that arose in the relationships between family members. Additionally, we will investigate the

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[370] Ibid., 580.

[371] Ibid.

[372] Ibid., 583. The converted people to Christianity are atheists or believers of other religions; also see Sharon Kim, *A Faith of Our Own: A Second-Generation Spirituality in Korean American Churches* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 5. Although many Koreans were known Christians before they came to America, non-Christians converted to settle family issues between parents and children.

[373] Ibid., 598.

pivotal roles within Korean communities of such institutions as Korean language schools and churches that seek to teach traditional Korean filial piety and faith growth. These communities can effectively teach and promote the practice of filial piety to the next generation within the Western culture in a way that is practical for the Korean church today.

4.1 The History of Korean Immigration

In 1620, the first Puritans arrived in a new land where they would be free to practice their faith and uphold God's ways. The Nation of Dreams that would be the United States of America was born.[374] To this land of dreams, Koreans turned their eyes and also came to fulfill their aspirations. The history of Korean immigration to the United States began about 120 years ago[375] and can be divided into three phases.[376] The first wave of it began in 1903 as laborers came to sugar plantations in Hawaii. Shin notes that more than 7,000 Koreans, most of them men, came to Hawaii looking for relief from economic hardship in Korea.[377] Between 1910 and 1924, more than 1,000 Korean picture brides were admitted to the U.S. joining their spouses in Hawaii.[378]

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[374] Francis J. Bremer, *The Puritan Experiment: New England Society from Bradford to Edwards* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1995), 44.

[375] SunJu Lee, *A Century of Suffering and Glory: The Korean American Community, A History* (Los Angeles: Christian Herold, 2006), 25.

[376] Sarah J. Shin, *Developing in Two Languages: Korean Children in America* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd., 2004). 42. Shin notes that: "Korea was the last country in Northeast Asia to establish a diplomatic relationship with the United States. Soon after the ratification of the Korean American Treaty in 1882, which permitted Koreans to reside and work in all parts of the United States, a team of Korean diplomatic envoys visited the United States on a goodwill mission. In 1888, after the first Korean legation was established in Washington, D.C., a small number of Korean students, political exiles, ginseng merchants and migrant laborer began to arrive in America; see also, Lee, *Century of Suffering and Glory*, 25.

[377] Ibid., 43. She notes that most of early immigrants were laborers, ex-soldiers, students, and political refugees, fleeing explication by the Korean government and increasing control by the Japanese, who eventually annexed Korea in 1910. They labored long hours under harsh conditions on sugar plantations or as cooks, janitors, and launderers at subsistence wages.

[378] Ibid. Shin further explains that in 1907, after the Gentlemen's Agreement between the US and the Japanese government halted Japanese and Korean immigration to the US, Koreans were no longer allowed entry. However, Korean picture brides, who had entered into marriages with Korean immigrants based on photo exchanges and correspondence, continued to be granted admission to the United States. As a result, the Korean American population remained quite small for several decades (26).

Before the Korean War (1950), the Korean community on the US mainland numbered closer to 10, 000.[379]

The second wave occurred when the United States government eased restrictions on Asian immigration by passing the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 that opened the way for a steady increase in the number of Korean immigrants.[380] This group consisted largely of college-educated immigrants who migrated voluntarily seeking political and social security and better opportunities for their children's education.[381] This trend did not change until the third[382] and most recent wave of Korean immigration, that followed the 2008 financial crisis. This group has shown significant changes in the fundamental social characteristics of previous immigrants.[383] Exposure of subsequent generations to Western values has led to a loosening of traditional Korean traditions including filial piety. However, throughout the history of Korean immigration, the practice and encouragement of filial piety have been emphasized. Every May, those who have practiced filial piety are rewarded with the presentation of the Filial Piety Award on Parent's Day.[384]

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[379] Rachael Miyung Joo and Shelley Sang-Hee Lee, *A Companion to Koran American Studies* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 3.

[380] Eunjung Kim and Seth Wolpin, *The Korean American Family: Adolescents versus Parents Acculturation to American Culture,* Journal of Cultural Diversity 15 (3) (2008), 108-16. 110.

[381] Ibid. The 2000 census documented a little over one million Korean Americans in the United States. Moreover, based on the statistics from 2020, Korean students studying in the United States rank as the third largest group of international students worldwide.

[382] Pyung Gap Min, *Changes in Korean Immigrants' Gender Role and Social Status, and Their Marital Conflicts,* Sociological Forum 16 (2) (2001), 310-320, 301; also see Shin, *Developing in Two Languages*, 41, 46. Shin highlights that the Korean population in the United States has reached one million, ranking fifth among Asian and Pacific Islander groups in the US, trailing behind Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, and Vietnamese immigrants. As of the 2000 US Census, there were 1.2 million Koreans living in the United States. The majority, constituting 78%, are foreign-born immigrants (the first generation) and their children who arrived after 1965. Notably, California boasts the largest Korean American population, followed by the New York and New Jersey metropolitan areas. Other significant Korean American communities are found in cities like Chicago, Georgia, San Francisco, Seattle, Washington D.C., and various other major metropolitan cities.

[383] Pyung Gap Min, *The Immigration of Koreans to the United States: A Review of 45 Year (1965-2009) Trends,* Development and Society 40:2 (Dec. 2011), 195-223, 206.

[384] https://news.koreadaily.com/2023/05/02/life/senior/20230502210902265.html. The newspaper of Joong ang Il Bo (May. 3. 2023). In both Korea and the United States, similar to the celebration of Mother's Day in the U.S.,

Today's Korean immigrants are well-educated and enter the United States primarily for work and education as students, bridging Generation Z (the mid-1990s to early 2000s) and the Millennial Generation M (the early 1980s to early 1990s).[385] They exhibit a distinct social structure that sets them apart from previous Korean immigrants, benefiting from increased adaptability through diverse cultural exposure in Korean society.[386] These younger generations may prioritize individualism and independence over traditional collective family values. This could result in a less strict adherence to filial piety compared to their immigrant ancestors. They are characterized as middle-class socioeconomically and consist of liberal arts college graduates engaged in a diverse range of occupations.[387]

According to the "Status of Overseas Koreans," report released every two years by the South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as of 2021, the global population of overseas Koreans is estimated to be 7,321,143.[388] The United States has the largest number of Korean immigrants, with a total of 2,633,777 ethnic Korean residents.[389] The Korean population in the United States has grown to more than 1.7 million in 2010,[390] and from an estimated 1.9 million Koreans in the United States in 2018.[391] The large cohorts of post-1965 immigrants are now approaching

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there's a tradition of observing "Parents' Day" in May. Specifically, on the second Sunday of May, individuals who have demonstrated exemplary filial piety are acknowledged and presented with the Filial Piety Award. This tradition is upheld by Korean associations in numerous metropolitan areas across the United States. In 2023, the New Jersey Korean Association publicly revealed the recipients of the 22nd Filial Piety Awards. The organizers of this event thoroughly evaluated a list of recommended nominees before officially announcing the awardees. These Filial Piety Awards, which consistently serve as a source of inspiration, are akin to oases in an arid landscape. The recipients, in their humility, attribute their commendable deeds to simply fulfilling their familial responsibilities.

[385] Sook Jung Lee, *Democratization and Polarization in Korean Society*, Asian Perspective 29 (3), (2005): 99-125, 101.

[386] Ibid.

[387] Min, *Immigration of Koreans to the United States*, 199.

[388] https://www.mofa.go.kr/www/wpge/m_21509. *2021 Overseas Korean Population Status PDF. 2.* (Feb. 11, 2022).

[389] Ibid.

[390] Pyung Gap Min, *Koreans in North America: Their Experiences in the Twenty-First (*Lanham: Lexington Books, 2013), 12, 16, 19.

[391] Research Brief: *Mistreatment of Korean Elders*. 2022. NCEA which is National Center on Elder Abuse. https://ncea.acl.gov/NCEA/media/Publication/NCEA_RB_KoreanElders. Pdf 1.

retirement.[392] The general population of people 65 years of age and older, who now comprise 12.8% of the total U.S. population, is predicted to comprise 20% by 2030.[393] As such, the Korean community in the U.S. will be facing the crisis of elder care as well.

Contrary to the long history of filial piety practiced in Korean culture, there have been reports of the mistreatment of Korean elders. NCEA[394] reports that among elderly Koreans in the United States, emotional abuse was the predominant form of mistreatment.[395] This statistic emphasizes the importance of addressing this issue as perhaps what an elderly Korean would consider as abusive, would not seem so to the children. Based on an exploratory study of Korean history, examined attitudes and beliefs among 1.5 and second-generation Korean American adults regarding filial expectations and support for aging immigrant parents.[396] The results showed that adult children were primarily motivated by feelings of gratitude and a strong sense of responsibility toward their parents. They were also preparing for future support of their parents' finances, health care, and long-term care needs.[397] As such perhaps the feelings of gratitude were seen to be met by the children through physical means rather than traditional respectful emotional support expected by their elders. In any case, communication concerning expectations between the generations is key to maintaining proper filial piety.[398]

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[392] Grace J. Yoo and Barbara W. Kim, *Remembering Sacrifices: Attitude and Beliefs among Second-Generation Korean Americans Regarding Filial Support,* J Cross Cult Gerontology (2010), 25:165-81. 166.

[393] Ibid.

[394] NCEA is National Center on Elder Abuse.

[395] Miya Chang, *Experience of Elder Abuse among Older Korean Immigrants,* Journal of Elder Abuse & Neglect 28 (2) (2016):76-94 Doi: 10.1080/08946566.2016.1156593; also, Miya Chang, *Comparative Study on Subjective Experience of Elder Abuse Between Older Korean Immigrants in the United States and Older Koreans in Korea,* International Journal of Aging and Human Development 88 (2) (2019)):187-210. Doi: 10.1177/0091415018759750.

[396] Ibid., 165.

[397] Ibid.

[398] Minhong Lee, Eunkyong Yoon, and Nancy P. Kropf, *Factors Affecting Burden of South Koreans Providing Care to Disabled Older Family Members, International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 64* (3) (2007):245-62. 245. It is also interesting to note that research has shown that daughters of families in the U.S. are more likely than sons to plan on caring for their parents. Today, even in Korea, there is a tendency for parents to prefer daughters over sons. Compared to patriarchal society of ancient Korea, parents today want to have daughters

Sung argues that the ways in which elder respect is expressed seem to be shifting. According to him, the meaning of elder respect is shifting from obedience and subservience to courtesy and kindness.[399] He argues that young people value reciprocity between generations; consulting and communicating need to be widely practiced. He supposes that changes in recent years indicate a new trend, a move from authoritarian and patriarchal relationships to egalitarian and reciprocal patterns of mutual respect between generations.[400] Younger generations are modifying their ways of respecting elders. Difficulties arise when first-generation immigrants who are attached to the traditional values of elder respect, filial obligation, and interdependent family relationships, clash with their children who have been socialized in the American cultural context and its intrinsic values.[401]

4.1.1 Changes and Challenges in Korean Immigrant Family Relationships in the U.S.

Elder *et al* argue that the American family has changed dramatically.[402] Those who have children are working more hours outside of the home than ever before. According to Elder, one of the most significant changes in the American family has been the decline of the traditional nuclear family.[403]

> In the 1950s, the traditional father-breadwinner, mother-homemaker family was the dominant structure of family life in the United States. Over the next half-century, such traditionally structured families became less and less common. In 1970, married couple households with children formed 40 percent of all households. Four decades later, in 2010, married couples with children formed

over sons since daughters sincerely consider and take care of parents more than males. Especially, as a son gets married, he is seen as the husband of daughter-in-law not the son of parents. In all aspects of life, it has become a natural phenomenon for the daughters to take better care of their parents and look after their siblings. Lee *et al*. argue that women express stronger filial piety than men throughout the life course. This phenomenon is contrary to traditional filial piety. The eldest son or his wife was responsible for his parent's care in the Confucian tradition.

[399] Kyu-Taik Sung, *Elder Respect: Exploration of Ideals and Forms in East Asia,* Journal of Aging Studies 15 (2001), 13-26, 21.

[400] Ibid., 22.

[401] Ibid., 24.

[402] Laurel Elder and Steven Greene, *The Politics of Parenthood: Causes and Consequences of the Politicization and Polarization of the American Family*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012), 11.

[403] Ibid., 12.

> only 21 percent of all the households in the U.S. One reason for the decline in traditionally structured households is that marriage has become a much less common experience in American society. In the 1950s, married couples dominated the social landscape of the U.S., forming about 80 percent of all households. By 1970, this figure had dropped to 71 percent and by 2005 slightly less than 50 percent of households were composed of married couples.

The American family structure has transformed significantly in the past fifty years.[404] The nuclear family, which at one point served as the unchallenged cultural ideal, has slowly been replaced with a more diverse understanding of what constitutes a family.[405] Vinovskis argues that parental control over children underwent a significant decline, mirroring a growing emphasis on individuality and freedom for youth.[406] He goes on to say that this decline in parental control is often driven by a desire to foster independence, critical thinking, and decision-making skills in children.[407] It reflects a growing emphasis on individuality and freedom for young individuals, recognizing that allowing them to have some control over their lives can contribute to their personal development and self-confidence. However, it is essential to keep a balance between granting independence and providing necessary guidance and support for the children's well-being.

In Asian groups, Taiwanese immigrants are concerned about the individual freedom of Americans as a threat to family harmony.[408] Chen argues that without a moral tradition that sets collective obligations before the individual, the stability of the family falls.[409] This perspective

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[404] Daniel A. Cox, *New Trends and Enduring Patterns in American Family Life Survey Center on American Life*, Project of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research (2022), 6.

[405] Cox, *New Trends and Enduring Patterns in American Family Life Survey Center on American Life,* 8. While there was no single cause for this shift, a number of cultural, economic, and social changes helped bring about the rise of a more varied family structure.

[406] Maris A. Vinovskis, "Historical Perspectives on the Development of the Family and Parent-Child Interactions" in Jane B. Lancaster *et al* eds., *Parenting across the Life Span: Biosocial Dimensions* (New York: Routledge, 1987), 297.

[407] Ibid.

[408] Chen, *From Filial Piety to Religious Piety,* 580.

[409] Ibid.

suggests that a moral tradition emphasizing collective obligations over individual interests is crucial for supporting social structures like families. Recognizing collective obligations can reinforce the idea that individuals are interdependent and rely on each other for various needs. This interdependence could promote a cooperative and harmonious family environment. However, placing too much emphasis on collective obligations might restrict individual autonomy and personal desire. This could potentially lead to frustration, resentment, and a lack of personal fulfillment within families. It may be important, then, to keep a balance between individual needs and collective obligations. Overemphasizing one at the expense of the other might lead to an imbalanced family dynamic, where individual well-being is neglected.

When immigrants leave their homeland and settle in another country, they must adapt to a new culture and surroundings that may be vastly different from their home country.[410] In Korean immigrant families, cultural differences and structural changes impact family relations.[411] As we shall see that the time-consuming running of small businesses, language barriers, and cultural differences all hinder the feasibility of maintaining traditional Korean parent-child relationships and influence the practice of Korean filial piety.[412] The busy lives[413] of immigrants and cultural/language gaps between generations pose challenges to meaningful interactions within the family.

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[410] Betty Lee Sung, *Bicultural Conflicts in Chinese Immigrant Children*, Journal of Comparative Family Studies 16 (2) (Summer 1985), 255-69.

[411] Pyung Gap Min, *Changes and Conflicts: Korean Immigrant Families in New York* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1998), 25-26.

[412] Ibid. Due to long hour's work, parents are not available to spend time with their children.

[413] Pyong Gap Min, "Korean Americans," in *Asian Americans: Contemporary Trends and Issues*, ed. Pyong Gap Min (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1995), 209. Min notes that about 45% of Korean immigrant workers are self-employed in small business such as green groceries, liquor stores, dry cleaning businesses, or beauty supply stores where they sell wigs, handbags, or jewelry. And 30% find employment in the Korean ethnic market.

Korean immigrant women have experienced significant changes in their social and economic roles in the new land.[414] In Korea, patriarchy was firmly rooted in Confucian values that emphasized distinct roles for husbands and wives. Men were considered as the family's head, while women tended to household duties. However, in the immigrant context, Korean married women were compelled to assume unfamiliar economic roles, working outside of the home due to financial constraints. At the same time, they carried the double burden of the total household responsibilities which has led to increased stress, role strain, and depression.[415]

This phenomenon is not exclusive to women in a single household. Children, too, experience confusion and challenges in the process of acculturation.[416] In immigrant families, "emotional labor" may be performed by the children who assume roles similar to those performed by mothers in non-immigrant families.

> Both male and female children of immigrants serve as bridges for their parents in ways that not only entail cultural and language brokering but also involve emotional labor ranging from doing well in school in childhood to being present for aging immigrant parents in later life. Children of Korean immigrants observe and recognize personal sacrifices and institutional disadvantages that their parents experience in American society and that trying to do well in school, attend top-notch colleges, pursue professional careers, marry a co-ethnic, have children, and observe and reinvent cultural traditions are all forms of emotional labor that they perform for their families over a lifetime. Several insightful studies discuss intergenerational relations within the broad context of non-white immigrant populations who have arrived since the 1960s, and in particular the need felt by many children of immigrants to give back to their parents in old age.[417]

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[414] Ibid., 43.

[415] Ibid.

[416] John W. Berry, *Acculturation: A Personal Journey across Cultures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 10. Berry's definition of acculturation describes it as the process of both cultural and psychological change that occurs when different cultural groups and their individual members come into contact. This process is mutual, leading to alterations in social structures, institutions, and cultural norms. Scholars suggest that the most advantageous approach to acculturation is the cultivation of an integrated identity. This integrated identity seeks to retain cultural heritage while simultaneously nurturing positive connections within the larger society.

[417] Grace J. Yoo and Barbara W. Kim, *Caring across Generations: The Linked Lives of Koran American Families* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 8.

For Korean immigrant families, finding a balance between autonomy and interdependence of children has emerged as a prominent issue.[418] Children are forced to learn things on their own and become more independent in America as their parents do not have the skills and knowledge to help them. In addition, immigrant parents often rely on their children's help for English translation[419] and various other tasks visiting hospitals and government offices together. Thus, the parent-child relationship in such a vastly different culture must possess an attitude of mutual cooperation and reciprocity.

Korean American families seek to embrace their Korean cultural and linguistic heritage while also valuing the acquisition of American values, customs, and English.[420] Sam and Berry, psychology scholars, argue that this reflects the concept of integration, where immigrants strive to find harmony between their heritage and the dominant culture, fostering a successful path to adaptation.[421] Korean immigrant parents and their adolescent children each reported that learning American values and customs is important as well as maintaining Korean values and customs.[422] However, it is interesting to note Kim's findings which found that while 90% of the parents thought this was true for their children, only 65% of the adolescents felt this was necessary for

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[418] Kyunghwa Kwak, *Adolescents and Their Parents: A Review of Intergenerational Family Relations for Immigrant and Non-Immigrant Families,* Human Development 46:2-3 (March-June 2003), 115-36, 115.

[419] Chen, *From Filial Piety to Religious Piety,* 581.

[420] Kim, *Korean American Family*, 6.

[421] David L. Sam and John W. Berry, *Acculturation: When Individuals and Groups of Different Cultural Background's Meet Perspectives* on Psychological Science (2010), 5:472. Sam and Berry note that there are relationships between how individuals acculturate and how well they adapt to cultural changes; see also, Berry views in his book, "*Acculturation*" (2019), 24 that adaptation to acculturation refers to how well individuals succeed in daily life in their own group and in the larger society. First adaptation is psychological (a sense of well-being, or self-esteem, or feeling well) and second is sociocultural adaptation (sometimes called doing well). According to him, these adaptations link the individual to others in the new society and are manifested by competence in the activities of daily intercultural living, including social relations, success at school, work, and in community life. The third and recent adaptation is intercultural one. This is that the interest is in how well individuals manage to achieve workable relationships with others across cultural boundaries within the plural society (relating well). The focus is one the achievement of positive intercultural relationship (such as mutually positive ethnic group attitudes, and a lack of prejudice and discrimination), and the acceptance of a multicultural ideology, which is a general view that places a value on both cultural diversity and equitable participation by everyone in the larger society.

[422] Shin, *Developing in Two Languages,* 55.

their parents. This probably lies in the differences in perception between parents and adolescent children's generational gap and miscommunication. Parents may hold more traditional values and expectations, while children are influenced by their experiences in American society. Also, children may not fully understand or appreciate the sacrifices and values of their parents, and parents may not be aware of the challenges their children face in a different cultural context. This lack of understanding can contribute to differing views on filial responsibilities.

Korean Americans report feeling increased pressure to adopt various traits that are important for success in American society[423] such as social assertiveness, openness and self-disclosure, and the development of greater individuality.[424] At the same time, Korean parents strongly desire that their children retain knowledge of Korean history and traditional values including respecting parents, being modest, and placing family needs and duties above individual interests.[425] Such seemingly incompatible values have contributed to Korean parents' ambivalence about the acculturation of their children in America.[426] On the one hand, they want their children to succeed here, while on the other they are concerned about the potential loss of traditional Korean values and the effect of that loss on the relationships within the family and the Korean community as a whole.

Acculturation is an inevitable challenge for the majority of immigrants in the United States.[427] First-generation Korean immigrants often maintain strong connections within their ethnic community and culture, sometimes leading them to isolate themselves from the dominant

[423] Ibid.
[424] Ibid.
[425] Ibid.
[426] Ibid., 56.
[427] Kelly Chong, *What It Means to Be Christians: The Role of Religion in the Construction of Ethnic Identity and Boundary among Second Generation Korean Americans*, Sociology of Religion, 59 (3) (Fall, 1998), 260.

culture and resist assimilation into its language and customs.[428] Concurrently as Hurh argues, the second-generation Korean Americans find themselves caught between the Asian worldview of their parents and that of the Western culture and the expectation of success when living there. They must grapple with the challenges of existential ambivalence and identity as they navigate their dual heritage.[429]

As noted above, the lesser expectations of the second-generation for their parents to acculturate also contribute to the difficulty of the situation. As the second-generation adheres to the Western values of individual interest, rights, intimacy, and independence, the first-generation holds onto Korean values of family interest, duty, obligation, and mutual dependence among kin based on the social ethic of Confucianism.[430] Both parties experience great dissonance in their beliefs and values. As such, understanding the disparities in perspectives and culture between the first and second-generations of Korean American immigrants is the crucial first step in the resolution of, for our purposes, the practice of filial piety. This may then lead to further dialog between the generations as we seek, through a Christlike lens the answer to such questions as: What are the expectations of each generation? Are the values of Korean and American cultures mutually exclusive? What new perspectives may be gained?

4.1.2 American Values

Values are often viewed as meaningful, abstract ideals that hold practical significance, shaping both individual behavior and institutional practices.[431] Thus, values are closely related to the

[428] Min, "Korean Americans," 214-15.

[429] Won Moo Hurh, *Koran Americans* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 43.

[430] Carola Suarez-Orozco and Marcelo M. Suarez-Orozco, *Children of Immigration* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 76-77.

[431] Shalom H. Schwartz, *Universalism Values and the Inclusiveness of Our Moral Universe*, Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology 38 (2007):711-28, 711.

norms of culture.[432] They entail the guiding principles, ethical standards, and thoughts that shape and define how individuals live their lives. Samuel Huntington identifies six American values: liberty, equality, individualism, democracy, the rule of law under a constitution, and concerns for limited and local government.[433] Thus, American values are those that guide the American people's attitudes towards right and wrong. That is to say, the values held by a society serve to determine acceptable actions within it.[434] For example, American parents value autonomy in their children, and may grant them more freedom as they are seen as responsible for their behavior.

Individualistic societies are described as emphasizing independence, freedom, and personal assertiveness as socializing climates in which a person's self-esteem develops.[435] Children are encouraged to establish their own goals and pursuits according to their own interests driven by self-interest.[436] Wilson *et al.* argue that this view of self-awareness is based on the idea that one's private self resides within each person and is consistent with such cultural themes as the separateness and distinctiveness of each person.[437] American parents tend to stress positive relationships, firm but non-controlling child-rearing, and reliance on reasoning and persuasion as most effective in enabling children to learn values.[438] This approach to parenting that relies on reasoning and persuasion rather than authoritarian methods tends to foster critical thinking and

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[432] Zhong Wang and Weiwei Fan, *American Values Reflected in Names of US Supermarkets, The Top Five Values and American Dream*, Open Journal of Modern Linguistics 3:4 (Dec. 2013), 348-55, 348.

[433] Charles Lockhart, *Gaining Ground Tailoring Social Programs to American Values*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2020), 23.

[434] Wang and Fan, *American Values Reflected in Names of US Supermarkets,* 349.

[435] Stephen Wilson, Gary W. Peterson, and Suzanne Steinmetz, *Parent-Youth Relations: Cultural and Cross-Cultural Perspectives* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2012), 541.

[436] Kevin MacDonald, "The coherence of individual development: An evolutionary perspective on children's internalization of parental values," J. E. Grusec & L. Kuczynski eds., *Parenting and Children's Internalization of Values: A Handbook of Contemporary Theory* (New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1997), 362–97, 363.

[437] Ibid.

[438] Joan E. Grusec, Jacqueline J. Goonow and Leon Kuczynski, *New Directions in Analyses of Parenting Contributions to Children's Acquisition of Values Child Developmen*t 71:1, (Jan-Feb. 2000), 205-11. 205.

problem-solving skills in children. When parents explain the reasons behind rules and decisions, it helps children to understand the principles and values that guide those rules. This understanding encourages autonomy as children make choices based on their own judgment rather than simply following the dictates of their parents. Ultimately, children raised with these parenting styles are more likely to develop independent, self-aware individuals who are comfortable making choices based on their own values and interests. As such, as Youniss and Ketterlinus have noted, the American parent-adolescent relationship is often characterized by closeness, fostered through meaningful conversations about life, respect, and mutual understanding.[439]

However, as the structure of the family evolves, so too have the perceptions and dynamics surrounding children and parent-child relationships.[440] Today, Americans are marrying later and having smaller families.[441] They prioritize individual preferences to an even greater extent.[442] The primacy of individual preferences also manifests itself in family life.

> It is said that fewer Americans growing up today have regular meals with their family, a practice that was routine a generation ago. And Generation Z reports having lonelier childhoods than those born in earlier generations. But not all changes in family life are exclusively the culmination of shifting personal desires; the loss of faith in formative institutions, rising cost of childcare, and feelings of economic insecurity among young adults may play roles as well… Raising children requires extensive financial obligation for many Americans.[443]

These socioeconomic factors have led young adults to pursue lives without getting married or having children. This phenomenon is not unique to the United States. Currently,

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[439] James Youniss and Rober D. Ketterlinus, *Communication and Connectedness in Mother – and Father - Adolescent Relationships,* Journal of Youth and Adolescence 16:3 (Jun. 1987), 265-80, 272.

[440] Cox, *New Trends and Enduring Patterns in American Family Life Survey Center on American Life,* 14.

[441] Ibid.

[442] Ibid.

[443] Ibid.

South Korea also has a low birth rate of 0.78 children per couple.[444] Even with a college degree, it is difficult to secure a job, and the high costs of raising children and living expenses often delay marriage or discourage couples from having children. Living expenses such as housing, education, healthcare, and daily necessities, can be a significant barrier to starting a family. Young adults may feel that they need to achieve a certain level of financial stability before taking on the responsibilities of marriage and parenthood, as opposed to marrying earlier and achieving certain life goals as a married couple.[445] Consequently, the younger generations tend to prioritize maintaining individual lives over marriage.

Lives are intricately intertwined, shaped by socio-historical influences and intergenerational connections.[446] The challenges and successes faced by each generation are influenced by the preceding generation and impact the next generation.[447] In short, the values associated with individualism in American culture have evolved in such a way to increase the individualistic ideal. Later marriage, two family incomes, and fewer children have fostered an atmosphere where individualism is enhanced and reinforced, contributing to a greater disconnect between Korean and American culture and the relationships between the generations.

4.1.3 Korean Traditional Values

[444] Statistics Korea, 2022 *Birth and Death Statistics (Preliminary)* Pdf, 1. (Feb. 22. 2023). According to the Statistics Korea on the Feb. 22nd, 2023, "the total fertility rate, which represents the number of children expected to be born to a woman during her lifetime, decreased by 0.03 from 0.81 in 2021 to 0.78 last year. This means that an average of only 78 children is expected to be born to 100 couples (200 individuals), reducing the population of the parent generation by nearly one-third in the child generation." The newspaper of Chosun analyze that the decline in marriage rates is identified as one of the causes of low birth rates. https://www.korea.kr/briefing/policyBriefingView.do?newsId=156553941. http://archive.chosun.com/pdf/i.

[445] Cox, *New Trends and Enduring Patterns in American Family Life Survey Center on American Life*, 14.

[446] Yoo and Kim, *Caring across Generations,* 5.

[447] Ibid.

Korean Americans embody a group-oriented ethnic minority, where their moral and social principles of conduct are deeply influenced by the values of collectivism and Confucianism.[448] Confucianism emphasizes virtues and values such as filial piety, strong family bonds, respect for elders, and a strong pursuit of education.[449] Generational conflicts arise due to cultural differences between parents and children. Korean culture, characterized by its focus on family, interdependence, authority, duty, and obedience, clashes with American culture, which values individualism, independence, democracy, and personal desire. While the first-generation endeavors to preserve their Korean cultural heritage and identity, the second-generation may perceive aspects of Korean culture as irrational, unreasonable, and outdated.[450]

Along with Confucianism, one of the most prominent cultural features in Korean society is collectivism.[451] It views social relations as an integration of individuals into a collective whole, prioritizing harmony over individual happiness or satisfaction.[452] Collectivism views the family as an extension of the self.[453] It emphasizes group values as more important than those of the individual. A strong emphasis on collective obligations can foster a sense of unity and interconnectedness within families and communities. This cohesion may lead to stronger support systems and mutual assistance during challenging times.

Collectivism is apparent in the Korean language as well. Koreans feel more comfortable with the use of the words "our" rather than "my/mine," and "we" rather than "I/me." *Woori* (우리,

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[448] Simone Sunghae Kim, *Individualism and Collectivism: Implications for Women*, Pastoral Psychology 58:5-6 (2009), 563-78.

[449] Kwangkyu Lee, "Confucian Tradition in the Contemporary Korean Family," in *Confucianism and the Family,* edt Water H. Slote and George A. Devos (Albony, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998), 251.

[450] Sungyi Jang Choi, *Strengthening Family Resilience: A Christian Education Model for Korean American Families,* (Ph. D., Thesis, Claremont School of Theology, 2005), 66.

[451] Kim, *Individualism and Collectivism*, 564.

[452] Kim, *Confucianism and Familism of Korea,* 93.

[453] Kim and Wolpin, *Korean American Family,* 2.

We) refers to the ingroup, which tends to be a closer relationship among the people.[454] For example, Koreans refer to their spouse as "our husband," or "our wife," rather than "my wife" or "my husband."[455] Also, in informal and personal situations, most Koreans like to be called by family-related titles based on the age hierarchy. An elder's name is not used and to do so would be considered impolite. Rather, they are called by their family-related titles. For example, Koreans address their elders (anyone older than them) in a casual setting as "*Hyung* (형) or *Obba* (오빠 brother or sister), *Ah Ju Meoney* (Aunt), *Ah Jeo Ssee* (삼촌 Uncle) regardless of they are biological relatives or not. This custom fosters a feeling of familial connection where all are members of a family group rather than independent entities.[456]

Additionally, Korea has an honorific language system.[457] It contains a variety of levels of expressions and terms pertaining to honor and respect for elders.[458] Younger people are expected to have polite and respectful attitudes and speech when addressing their elders. They must not cross their legs while sitting before the elders[459]; upon greeting their elders, young people should bend their waist. These attitudes and manners of respecting elders are ingrained in children from elementary school on.

In addition, in collectivism, Koreans practice *noon-chi* (눈치) as a social cue in their communication. *Noon-chi* involves an inherent awareness or situational sensitivity. De Mente

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[454] Williams B. Gudykunst, *Asian American Ethnicity and Communication* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications Inc., 2001), 7.

[455] Korean culture does not recognize polygamy and polyandry. They are not legal.

[456] Gudykunst, *Asian American ethnicity and Communication*, 565. This researcher did not find that Americanized Korean children still do this.

[457] Lucien Brown and B. Water, *Korean Honorifics and Politeness in Second Language Learning*, (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2011), 22.

[458] Ibid.

[459] Traditional values in many Asian cultures promote modesty and humility, especially in the presence of older family members or authority figures. Sitting with legs crossed can be seen as immodest or arrogant, as it can sometimes be associated with a more casual attitude.

describes this phenomenon: "as cultural telepathy of Koreans." He argues: "Koreans are so culturally attuned to each other's thoughts and behavior [*noon-chi*], because they have been living together for several thousand years and until recent times were programmed deliberately and comprehensively to think alike and act alike. In fact, they seem to read each other's emotions and thoughts."[460]

Koreans that were born in Korea but have spent the majority of their developmental years in the United States are known as the "1.5-generation."[461] They are challenged by the task of adapting to the conflicting demands of the two cultures[462] as they reside in a traditional Korean household as they seek to assimilate in with the surrounding culture. They have a foot planted in both worlds that often conflict in the case of the practice of filial piety. The influence of their parents fostered the continuation of *noon-chi* in the "1.5-generation." However, its practice is diminishing among the 2.0-generation. Choi states that:

> Collectivism and individualism have been conceptualized over the past 2 decades as reflecting cultural attributes: shared attitudes, beliefs, norms, roles, and self-definition. The normative imperative of an individualist culture is to become independent from others by differentiating oneself from others and achieving autonomy, whereas that of collectivist culture is to maintain connectedness among individuals by fulfilling obligations and fitting into various interpersonal relationships.[463]

Choi goes on to claim that contrary to the traditional view that literature often portrays collectivism and individualism as mutually exclusive, these cultural orientations coexist within a given self-construal.[464] An individual may value independence and autonomy in some aspects of

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[460] De Mente, *Korean Mind,* 267.

[461] Soojin Ahn, *1.5-Generation Korean American's Transnational Identity: Stories from Four College Students*, International Journal of Multicultural Education, 22:1 (2020), 16-34, 17.

[462] Keum Hyeong Choi, *Psychological Separation – Individuation and Adjustment to College among Korean American Students: The Roles of Collectivism and Individualism*, Journal of Counseling Psychology 49 (4) (2002): 468 – 75, 469.

[463] Ibid.

[464] Ibid., What Choi argues is that traditionally, literature often portrays collectivism and individualism as entirely separate and incompatible cultural orientations. However, Choi suggests that in reality, individuals can hold

their life while also valuing connectedness, obligations, and fitting into social roles in other aspects. In essence, people can be influenced by both cultural attributes to varying degrees, and they may adapt their behavior and identity, accordingly, depending on the situation and context. Individuals can possess self-concepts that incorporate both these well-developed cultural orientations.[465]

Korea's family-centered collectivism seeks harmony. While collectivism is a dominant cultural trait in Korea, individualism is not completely absent. Within family-centered collectivism, individuals may still have personal goals, aspirations, and a desire for some degree of autonomy. It's not a rigid separation; rather, it's a dynamic interaction where individuals adapt to and coexist harmoniously with the cultural values of collectivism while retaining some aspects of individualism. Each family member strives to maintain the values of the family and prioritizes family unity over individual goals or preferences to preserve harmony. From a young age, people learn to prioritize family and value harmony among family members. Therefore, good values such as filial piety of honoring parents and elders, along with family-centered collectivism, are the values that immigrant Korean parents aim to pass down to their children.

In summary, throughout the 120-year history of Korean immigration to the United States, Korean immigrants have sought to adapt to their new lives in a vastly different culture. It is difficult to balance traditional Korean values with the new values in the West. Influenced by collectivism and Confucianism, the first generation strove to preserve its Korean heritage. Korean culture values family, interdependence, authority, duty, and obedience. In contrast, American culture emphasizes individualism, independence, freedom, and self-esteem. The 1.5-

elements of both cultural orientations within their self-construal. Self-construal refers to how individuals perceive and define themselves in relation to others and their social environment. It is about how a person understands their identity, especially in the context of relationships and culture.

[465] Ibid.

generation and even more so subsequent generations of Korean immigrants may view aspects of Korean culture as old-fashioned or find them difficult to maintain as they become more westernized.

Korean Americans face the great challenge of navigating the acculturation process, balancing their desire for American success with the keeping of Korean values. The cultural disparities between Korean traditions and the dominant U.S. culture can lead to ambivalence and identity struggles for second-generation Korean Americans in regard to the expression of obedience to the Fifth Commandment. The traditional Korean culture lent itself to a mindset of respect and honor that was well-defined. However, this is often not the case in Western culture. Although keeping the fifth commandment is possible and often achieved in individualistic societies, the exercising of it may be quite unsatisfactory to those who practice traditional Korean values. Understanding cultural differences is crucial for the generations of Korean immigrants in bridging the gap between generations as they seek to honor their parents and succeed in the Western world.

4.2 Korean Community to Instruct Korean Values Including Filial Piety

The early Korean immigrants formed community networks for a variety of purposes. These local ethnic networks included churches, business community organizations, and Korean language schools, which have long played a vital role in providing a range of services to immigrant communities such as resettlement, interpretation, cultural engagement, language education, and family counseling, including parent-child issues.[466] While these organizations have proven

[466] Min, *Changes and Conflicts, 26.*

effective in supporting resettlement efforts, there is growing concern regarding their impact on facilitating mainstream integration.[467]

These networks served as extended families, providing the support and assistance that immigrants left behind in Korea for long-term integration and a sense of belonging in their new country. In this section, we shall investigate the role of Korean communities such as Korean language schools and churches particularly as it pertains to the education of filial piety.

4.2.1 Korean Language School, Teaching Korean Culture, Values, and Language

The importance of Korean language schools[468] established in cities across the United States is as significant as the role of churches. In the United States, there are around 1,200 Korean heritage language schools with a total student enrollment of approximately 60,000.[469] The majority of Korean language schools are established and managed by Korean Christian churches.[470] According to Pyung Gap Min, the Korean community has a higher number of ethnic language schools compared to other Asian communities, primarily due to the strong connection between Korean immigrants and Korean churches.[471] With an increasing Korean American population in the U.S., heritage language maintenance has become a significant concern of Korean immigrant

[467] Ibid., Cultural engagement in immigrant networks may perpetuate cultural segregation and hinder adaptation to the dominant country values. Language education is valuable but may lead to overreliance on native languages, creating communication barriers. Business support for immigrants is crucial, but excessive reliance may deter economic integration beyond their community. Family counseling services could reinforce traditional cultural norms, potentially causing conflicts, especially in parent-child relationships.

[468] The Korean Language School or Korean School is teaching students the Korean language, culture, and history. Its purpose is to foster the Korean language and preserve cultural heritage through Korean literature, speaking, reading, writing, and cultural experiences.

[469] Jisook Lee and Sarah J. Shin, *Korean Heritage Language Education in the United States: The Current State, Opportunities, and Possibilities*, Heritage Language Journal 6:2 (2008), 153-72, 153. Lee *et al*. note that the term 'heritage language' has been interchangeably used with 'community language,' 'native language,' and 'mother tongue' to describe a language, other than English, spoken by immigrants and potentially their offspring. The number of these schools might be larger since many small schools may be officially registered in the U.S Korean Embassy database.

[470] Ibid., 8.

[471] Pyung Gap Min, "Korean Americans' Language Use" in S. MacKay & S. C. Wong, eds., *New Immigrants in the United States* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 306.

families as they seek to maintain their Korean identity and values while assimilating to the Western culture.[472]

Ever since Korean immigrants arrived in the United States, community churches have played a vital role in preserving the language and culture of Korean American children through educational programs. As such, heritage schools played a vital role as a nurturing place for Korean American children, providing them with a sense of belonging and emotional support that they often lacked in mainstream formal schools.[473] Immigrant parents maintain a strong desire for their children to preserve their Korean language, as it serves to uphold their ethnic identity, strengthen family bonds, and open doors to greater opportunities in the future. Speaking the same language facilitates effective communication within the family and is a valuable means by which traditions, stories, and values are passed down from one generation to the next. Moreover, it can expand career opportunities, as a command of both English and Korean is valued in the marketplace.

Korean American parents hope that their children will learn and embrace the Korean language, history, and traditional virtues.[474] Although it may vary among different regions and Korean schools, many Korean schools recognize and reward filial piety and respecting elders during traditional Korean national holidays. For instance, the Korean-American newspaper, "*Hanin New York* (뉴욕한인신문)," wrote an article about the recipient of the Model Youth Award presented by the "Chisa Rang Moral Practice Movement Headquarters" in Korea.[475] Among the

[472] Mihyon Jeon, *Korean Heritage Language Maintenance and Language Ideology*, Heritage Language Journal 6:2 (Fall 2008), 54-71, 54.

[473] JinHee Kim, *Korean Immigrant Mother's Perspectives: The Meanings of a Koran Heritage Language School for Their Children's American Early Schooling Experiences*, Early Childhood Education Journal 39:2 (March 2011): 133-41, 137.

[474] Jeon, *Korean Heritage Language Maintenance and Language Ideology, 60.*

[475] http://www.newyorkilbo.com/11650.

recipients was a Korean student who was adopted into a white American family in the United States at the age of six months. Her name is Kang, Youngae (Emily Southwick, 17), and she attended the New York Korean School for 14 years, where she learned about filial piety and wholeheartedly put it into practice. She recognized her embodiment of filial piety and the preservation of Korean cultural identity.

The exemplary parenting of her adoptive parents, the Southwicks, was also honored with the Model Family Award. Youngae Kang, with the encouragement of her American parents, succeeded in demonstrating traditional Korean etiquette, filial piety, and respect for her exemplary parents, while living in an American household. The Southwicks recognized the importance for their daughter to learn about and maintain her Korean cultural identity. They provided her with after-school lessons in traditional Korean dance and other areas of Korean culture. Youngae Kang's story demonstrates that traditional Korean values, including filial piety, can transcend cultural boundaries and be embraced in diverse family settings. Her story provides a positive model for others to follow, fostering the continuation of filial piety within the Korean American community and beyond.

Education within the Korean community concerning the possibility of establishing and maintaining institutions that teach the Korean language, history, and ethical values along with strategies for overcoming any barriers that assimilation may pose, are essential-community for future generations growing up in the United States.

4.2.2 Korean American Church

Just as people from various countries living in the United States form their own communities, the church is a community sought by many Koreans in terms of size, influence, and resources in the

Korean American community.[476] Recently, there have been several important studies on the role of the Korean church in developing faith and transmitting ethnic culture such as filial piety to the second-generation.[477] These studies mainly find that second-generation Korean Americans embrace and practice a religion that is modeled after mainstream evangelicalism, not the religion of their immigrant parents.[478] Immigrant parents often incorporate cultural elements and traditions into their existing religious practices. Second-generation Koreans tend to embrace more aspects of Western evangelicalism that do not place as great an emphasis on the importance of filial piety, which may cause conflicts in cultural and religious identity; a generational gap, as second-generation Korean Americans struggle to relate to the traditional faith and cultural practices of their parents.[479] This contributes to feelings of confusion, isolation, and ultimately strained family relationships. Consequently, there can be challenges in transmitting these values from one generation to the next. Resolving these conflicts requires open communication and understanding between those who adhere to traditional values and adapting to changing expressions of religious beliefs. Establishing mutual respect among generations is vital for family unity and cultural continuity.

Kelly Chong maintains that the church plays an important role for second-generation Korean Americans in instilling and reinforcing ethnic identity and culture.[480] According to her, the ethnic church serves as an institutional vehicle for the cultural reproduction and socialization of the second-generation into Korean culture. Therefore, it appears that both the church and the

[476] Kim, *Faith of Our Own, 5.*

[477] Ibid., 6.

[478] Ibid., 8.

[479] Second-generation Korean Americans may experience an identity crisis as they navigate the tension between their parents' faith and cultural practices and the mainstream evangelicalism they encounter in the United States.

[480] Chong, *What It Means to Be Christians*, 262.

home may be valuable avenues by which instruction of the principles and practice of filial piety to the next generation may be achieved. It may serve the added benefit of contributing to the strengthening of family bonds and harmonious relationships between generations and promoting the moral and ethical development of responsibility and kindness so important in the traditional Korean culture. As such, the immigrant church is an important community in which the 1.5 generation or second-generation creates new models of parenting, family life, and learning moral and ethical truth.

4.2.2.1 The Significant Role of Korean American Church for Korean Immigrant Parents

The early Korean immigrants, in pursuit of their aspirations and dreams in their new lives, embraced religion with even greater fervor than in their homeland.[481] The Korean churches became a center of the immigrant community and provided for the various needs of immigrants.[482] They continue to function as a hub for sharing practical information and support essential for navigating the challenges of immigrant life. The Korean American church has served not only the spiritual needs of its members through worship and fellowship but also as a place for socializing with fellow immigrants and finding peace from the challenges of living in a culture that can be unwelcoming to newcomers.[483]

The Korean church serves many community functions. They facilitate the exchange of information about employment opportunities, housing, education, and vocational training among their members.[484] The clergy and church members also offer valuable assistance with translation,

[481] R. Stephen Warner, "The Korean Immigrant Church as Case and Model," in *Korean Americans and Their Religions: Pilgrims and Missionaries from a Different Shore*, ed. Ho Young Kwon, Kwang Chung Kim, and R. Stphen Warner (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 27.

[482] Shin, *Developing in Two Languages*, 56. Shin notes: "Business associations such as the Korean American Grocers Association (KAGRO) and the Korean Dry Cleaning and Laundry Association serve major social functions among Korean Americans."

[483] Shin, *Developing in Two Languages*, 57-58.

[484] Chong, *What It Means to Be Christian*, 281.

interpretation, and filling out English-language forms. Furthermore, many Korean churches operate weekend Korean language schools to educate the children of first-generation immigrant members, preserving their cultural heritage and facilitating bilingualism.[485]

First-generation Korean immigrants actively participated in church, and initially, second-generation Korean Americans showed a high level of ethnic-religious participation.[486] However, one of the significant challenges and concerns confronting Korean immigrant churches today is the diminishing of second-generation Korean American members, for it was the association of the church with traditional Korean values that served to transmit Korean culture to the next generation. [487]

4.2.2.2 The Korean American Church for Next Generations

The silent disappearance of second-generation Korean Americans in the traditional Korean church represents a notable concern as they express feelings of disconnectedness from Korean church communities.[488] During their childhood, children accompanied their parents to church where it acted as a powerful promoter of ethnic identity. However, as they reached adulthood, they began to perceive the limitations of the Korean church such as the pressure of conformity that suppresses individuality, and the strictness within the community, driven by cultural conservatism and religious devotion enforced by the first-generation.[489] This has led to a

[485] Ibid.

[486] Ibid.

[487] Karen J. Chai, "Beyond Strictness to Distinctiveness: Generational Transition in Korean Protestant Churches," in *Korean Americans and Their Religions: Pilgrims and Missionaries from a Different Shore*, ed. Ho-Young Kwon, Kwang Chung Kim, and R. Stephen Warner (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 158.

[488] Ibid.

[489] Peter T. Cha, "Ethnic Identity Formation and Participation in Immigrant Churches: Second-Generation Korean American Experiences, "in *Korean Americans and Their Religions: Pilgrims and Missionaries from a Different Shore*, ed. How-Young Kwon, Kwang Chung Kim, and R. Stephen Warner (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 150.

significant decline in church participation rates from 65 to 70 percent to an alarming 5 percent upon their college graduation.[490]

Kim cites the case of Hurh who was a 1.5-generation Korean immigrant who experienced this dilemma:

> Samuel Hurh came to America at six years old. In the Korean American church, he initially enjoyed the Korean language, and home-cooked Korean food, and adhered to numerous cultural norms such as deferentially bowing and showing respect to his elders. But, in his teenage, he left that Korean American church because of uncomfortableness and oppression and went to a white Protestant church. There, even though he grew in his spiritual walk, he did not fully belong to his racial status. He felt there was an invisible cultural barrier between him and the white pastors. No one has ever implied or explicitly suggested that he was an outsider, his cultural upbringing reminded him of his outsider status. Back and forth between the Korean immigrant church and the white church, he began to plant his own church in Orange County.[491]

Hurh's solution was to break away from both the traditional Korean church and the Western white evangelical church and to form a church that would meet the needs of 1.5 and subsequent Korean immigrants. Based on her research, Kim found that second-generation Korean American Christians are cautious and deliberate in choosing which elements of mainstream evangelicalism they want to embrace. Their goal is not simply to disassociate from the religion of their immigrant parents and realign themselves with mainstream evangelicalism.[492] Rather, in fashioning a faith of their own, they yearn to emulate the strengths and avoid the weaknesses of both American evangelicals and Korean immigrant Protestants.[493] From American evangelicals, they have adopted organizational structures and worship styles, while rejecting their individualism. With respect to Korean immigrant churches, the second-

[490] Ibid., 157.
[491] Kim, *Faith of Our Own,* 1-2.
[492] Ibid., 166.
[493] Ibid.

generation leaders want to preserve *Tong Sung Gido* (unison prayer) and embrace their parents' emphasis on the collective over the individual.[494] It is this aspect of the new Korean church that lends itself to the teachings of filial piety.

Chong agrees church participation among second-generation Korean Americans tends to be accompanied by a high degree of ethnic identity and consciousness. As such, leaving the traditional Korean church does not mean that second-generation Koreans wish to completely forsake their Korean values and heritage. Chong states:

> As an institutional vehicle for the cultural reproduction and socialization of the second generation, the Korean American church legitimizes and defends a set of core traditional Korean values and forms of social relationships, which constitute the main components of the second-generation identity. While second-generation Korean Americans consider their non-white race to be one of the most central traits of their identity, they also convey their ethnic identity by practicing certain traditional Korean cultural values. These values, apparent in their discourse about their Korean identity, consist of a set of core traditional Korean Confucian values – most significantly, filial piety, respect for parents, family-centeredness, and strong work ethic…Also, the Korean American church transmits and reinforces Korean culture among second-generation members through a variety of unwritten norms, rules, and codes of conduct, which are transmitted and perpetuated at the level of everyday social interaction. For example, everyone in the church is expected to adhere strictly to the rule of respecting elders; the younger members are expected to display deference to older members even within the English-speaking second-generation congregation…Thus, despite its role as a vehicle for the cultural interests of the first generation, the appeal of the Korean ethnic church for many second-generation members lies in its capacity to provide a refuge from this sense of marginalization and along with it, positive social identity and group empowerment.[495]

Among first-generation Korean Americans, social and cultural factors such as fellowship and ethnic reinforcement are more important than personal piety in explaining church participation.[496] They may attend church to receive a level of comfort and familiarity, especially

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[494] Ibid.

[495] Chong, *What It Means to Be Christian*, 267.

[496] Henry H. Kim and Ralph E. Pyle, *An Exception to the Exception: Second Generation Korean American Church Participation*, Social Compass 51:3 (Sep. 2004), 321-33, 323.

when dealing with language barriers and cultural differences in their new country. The church serves as a place where they can build relationships, receive social support, and find a sense of belonging in a new cultural context. It often functions as a central social network for first-generation Korean Americans, rather than a place to worship and express their religious faith. In comparison to them, Kim maintains that:

> Second-generation members are more highly acculturated than first-generation churchgoers, and they tend to embrace American culture more than Korean culture. Accordingly, there seems to be less of a need for the church to perform a variety of social service or status enhancement functions that are essential for the first-generation.[497] Second-generation Korean Americans are likely to see the church as a place where they can share their experiences with others and get in touch with their cultural roots. Consequently, the church can provide a context for establishing cultural ties and cultivating friendships. They can facilitate ethnic bonding and cultural maintenance… Korean American young adults did not see their parents' churches as a place where they could play a pivotal role. [498]

Sharon Kim argues that second-generation Korean Americans exist in a reciprocal and dynamic interchange with mainstream religion - both shaping and being shaped by the other.[499] Second-generation Korean Americans seek to introduce elements of their Korean heritage, such as language, customs, or cultural traditions, into the mainstream religious context. This exchange may enrich the cultural diversity within the religious community and influence religious congregations' traditions, worship styles, and diversity. Although second-generation Korean Americans may be highly respectful of the traditions and cultural norms embraced by the first-generation, it appears to be a natural and inevitable consequence that they distance themselves from their parent's traditional ways. Although the second-generation expresses, a reduced emphasis on using the church as a vehicle to maintain ethnic exclusivity,[500] they do maintain a

[497] Ibid.
[498] Ibid., 323-24.
[499] Kim, *Faith of Our Own,* 9.
[500] Ibid., 332.

highly developed sense of filial piety *(hyo*) toward the first-generation. For example, they willingly pay the mortgage, adjust the times of their services, and defer to the needs of the first-generation.[501] Thus, the essential element for a successful generational transition and an intergenerational church lies in a reciprocal relationship that promotes personal growth and embraces the practice of respecting elders along with the spirituality of the second generation.[502]

A study conducted by Yoo demonstrates that most participants are mindful of the difficulties and sacrifices their parents endured when they immigrated to the United States, and want to reciprocate for what they received.[503] As such, when their parents became ill or needed 24-hour care, they responded that they could care for them.[504] One respondent confessed: " We never think that we owe them. We never said that as one of our motivations to help them. We just love our parents. Personally, to some extent, I really appreciate the sacrifices. I don't want to see it [caring for my parents] as a sacrifice, and maybe they don't either."[505]

4.3 Summary

We have explored that in the 120 years of Korean immigration to the United States, Korean immigrants have grappled with the differences between their traditional collectivist values and the pursuit of individualism in their new homeland. The first generation, deeply influenced by collectivism and Confucianism, has fervently endeavored to preserve their cherished Korean heritage, which places significant emphasis on family, interdependence, authority, filial piety, and obedience. In contrast, American culture is individualistic, highlighting values such as personal independence, freedom, democracy, and self-esteem. This cultural chasm becomes

[501] Ibid.
[502] Chai, *Beyond Strictness to Distinctiveness*, 163-64.
[503] Yoo and Kim, *Remembering Sacrifices*, 172.
[504] Ibid.
[505] Ibid.

particularly evident when examining the perspective of the 1.5-generation or second-generation Korean immigrants, who may perceive certain aspects of Korean collectivism as outdated. Consequently, the younger generation places more value on personal independence, autonomy, and the cultivation of unique personal identities, while their elder counterparts continue to uphold the importance of psychological bonds and interdependence within the family unit.

Korean Americans find themselves struggling with the challenge of navigating the acculturation process, while seeking to harmonize their desires for American success along with their commitment to preserving Korean collectivist values. The cultural disparities between Korean traditions and the prevailing U.S. culture can lead to complex feelings of ambivalence and identity struggles, especially among second-generation Korean Americans that has spilled over into the church.

In addition, we have discussed the crucial role of Korean communities in strengthening a more harmonious coexistence of collectivism and individualism. The Korean immigrant community in the United States has established vital community networks, including churches, business organizations, and Korean language schools, which serve various purposes, including resettlement support and cultural preservation. These networks have played a significant role in supporting immigrants, but there are concerns about their impact on mainstream integration. Korean language schools, often affiliated with Korean churches, are crucial for maintaining heritage language skills and cultural identity among Korean American youth. These schools, which are usually affiliated with the church, emphasize values like filial piety and provide a sense of belonging.

Korean churches are central to the community, playing a pivotal role in preserving cultural values, including filial piety, among second-generation Korean Americans. However,

there is a challenge in retaining second-generation members due to cultural conservatism and pressure to conform. Second-generation Korean Americans engage with both mainstream religion and their immigrant parents' beliefs, creating a dynamic interchange that shapes their faith and cultural identity. They value elements of both American evangelicalism and Korean immigrant Protestantism. Despite distancing themselves from some old-world traditions, the second-generation maintains a strong sense of filial piety and reciprocation for their parents' sacrifices, emphasizing the importance of personal growth and respecting elders. The challenge for the future generations of Korean Americans lies in the manner in which filial piety is expressed as they seek to uphold this value in a way that is acceptable to their elders. In addition, they must find a way to continue to pass the concept and importance of filial piety to those future generations when the traditional generation has passed on.

In the next chapter, we will directly survey how Korean American adults children perceive filial piety and practice it.

CHAPTER 5

Exploring Filial Piety: A Survey of Korean American's Perceptions and Practices of Filial Piety at Gerizim Hope Presbyterian Church in the United States

5.0 Introduction

We have explored the history of the practice of traditional Korean filial piety based on Confucianism in Korea in Chapter 3. We have also examined the current attitudes and behaviors concerning filial piety of immigrant parents and their adult, independent children in the individualistic society of the United States. As we shall see, numerous studies have demonstrated that Korean parent-child relationships are evolving from authoritarian and patriarchal structures toward more reciprocal patterns of mutual assistance and respect. Kyu-Taik Sung suggests that the transition from the authoritarian forms of filial piety to a more mutual and mature loving relationship between parents and children demonstrates the need for a paradigm shift. He suggests that filial piety should not be measured merely by its behavioral components such as responsibility, sacrifice, and repayment, but should also include the emotional components of affection, harmony, and respect.[506]

It is in this ideological change that future generations living in individualistic societies may engage in reciprocal acts of filial piety grounded in love and gratitude, rather than adhering to authoritarian expressions of filial duty. Such a foundation for filial piety, when respectfully

[506] Kyu-Taik Sung, *A Cross-Cultural Comparison of Motivations for Parent Care: The Case of Americans and Koreans*, Journal of Aging Studies 8 (2) (1994), 206.

communicated to the more traditional elder Korean parent, may contribute greatly to its practice that is acceptable to them as well as future generations.

Filial piety is a key concept in cultural and family studies and is measured by standardized tools that determine attitudinal and behavioral aspects of the family. Many focus on parental authority and child obedience as theoretical foundations for the practice of filial piety.[507] The successful fulfillment of filial piety has typically been understood as being authoritarian in nature. That is, it requires children's absolute submission to their parent's wishes, as well as their duties to repay their parents' sacrifices, preserve family honor, and continue the ancestral line.[508] However, based on Sung's research that emphasizes a more reciprocal approach, Yeh and Bedford developed the DFPM (Dual Filial Piety Model) to integrate both the traditional prominence on authority and obedience with positive emotion and reciprocity.[509] Their studies have shown that filial piety is no longer perceived as an authoritative obligation, but instead, as an intergenerational exchange of care between children and parents.[510]

In addition, the motivation for and cultivation of open communication are important aspects in moving toward a more reciprocal practice of filial piety. Motivation is the central process for generating moral judgment and action[511] and is central in determining filial behavior.[512] Filial piety may often involve a sense of intrinsic motivation, where individuals are

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[507] Terry Y.S Lum, Elsie C. W. Yan, Andy H. Y. Ho, Michelle H. Y. Shun, Gloria H. Y. Wong, Mandy M. Y. Lau, and Junfang Wang, *Measuring Filial Piety in the 21st Century: Development, Factor Structure, and Reliability of the 10-Item Contemporary Filial Piety Scale*, Southern Gerontological Society, 1-3 (2015), 2.

[508] Ibid., Lum *et al* note that D.Y. F. Ho and Lee were one of the earliest who assessed scaled authoritarian relationship and Yang *et al* later contended that apart from the authoritative elements of parental conformity, protection, and glorification, filial piety should also include the notion of tender-heartedness to parents, which reflects the importance of emotion and affection in the parent-child relationship (3).

[509] Ibid.

[510] Ibid.

[511] Olwen Bedford and Kuang-Hui Yeh, *Evolution of the Conceptualization of Filial Piety in the Global Context: From Skin to Skeleton*, Cultural Psychology vol. 12:570547 (March 2021), 1-14. 11.

[512] Sung, *Cross-Cultural Comparison of Motivations for Parent*, 195-209, 196.

driven by an internal desire to honor and care for their parents, or it may be motivated by spiritual or religious beliefs. The motivation to practice filial piety is often rooted in the strength of interpersonal relationships. Individuals may be motivated by a genuine love and affection for their parents, recognizing the sacrifices made for their well-being that may lead to a strong sense of gratitude and a desire to reciprocate the care and support received.

Sung conducted a comprehensive study of adult children's attitudes toward providing care for their aging parents in Korea, highlighting the centrality of motivation in shaping filial behavior.[513] When a child is motivated out of a loving, reciprocal relationship with their parents, they were much more likely to be willing caretakers. Sung suggests that this positive motivation, rather than that of caretaking as an authoritarian duty serves as a reflection of societal values as a whole.[514]

In this chapter, we will report on a survey conducted informed by both DFPM, a methodology devised by Yeh and Bedford and Sung's research regarding filial motivations for the care of elderly parents. DFPM was defined by Yeh and Bedford for highlighting two universal human motivations in the context of the parent-child relationship: Reciprocal filial piety and authoritarian filial piety.[515] This survey will seek to determine to what extent if any, believers of different age groups within GHP Church[516] perceive and practice filial piety in the immigrant context. In order to gain insight into the evolving dynamics of intergenerational

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[513] Peizhen SUN, Xiaoyun Fan, Yudi Sun, Hongyan Jiang and Lu Wang, *Relations Between Dual Filial Piety and Life Satisfaction: The Mediating Roles of Individuating Autonomy and Relating Autonomy,* Front Psychology vol.10 (Nov. 2019) 1. Sung's study focused on the practice of filial piety between Korean parents and their adult children in South Korea.

[514] Ibid.

[515] K. H. Yeh and Olwen Bedford, *A Test of the Dual Filial Piety Model* Asian J. Social Psychology, 6 (2003), 215-28. Yeh and Bedford note: "REF is reflecting the need for interpersonal relatedness in terms of emotional safety and affective nodding with parents through expressions of love and affection. AFP is reflecting the need for social belonging and collective identity by avoiding punishment and gaining social reward through learning to obey parental demands and social norms."

[516] Hereafter, Gerizim Hope Presbyterian Church is used as GHP Church.

relationships and cultural adaptation in the U.S., the survey also includes inquiries regarding the significance of the church's role in teaching filial piety by targeting individuals within the church community.

5.1 Background: Dual Filial Piety Model and Filial Motivation

The majority of filial piety research has historically drawn upon Confucianism in Asian societies and conceptualized the foundation of filial piety on role obligations driven by an authoritarian relationship between parents and children. However, many recent studies have utilized the DFPM methodology[517] in order to conduct surveys in psychology studies regarding family dynamics.[518] Tran *et al* note that DFPS consists of 16 items. Eight items measure reciprocal (RFP), and eight items measure authoritarian (AFP) filial piety. Respondents were asked to indicate on a scale from 1 to 7 the importance of each statement. Examples of items measuring RFP include the following statement: "Be grateful to parents for raising you"; and AFP includes such items as: "Live with parents even after marriage."

The DFPM applies the concept of "contextualized personality," which includes feelings and patterns of thought in a culture, to reconceptualize filial piety in terms of either authoritarian or reciprocal psychological motivations particular to the parent-child context.[519] Filial piety as a contextualized personality emphasizes the psychological schema of parent-child interaction so

[517] Joanna Rozycka-Tran, Pawel Jurek, Thi Khanh ha Truong and Michal Olech, *The Implications of Filial Piety in Study Engagement and Study Satisfaction: A Polish-Vietnamese Comparison*, Frontiers in Psychology, Vol. 11: 525034, (Jan 2021), 5.

[518] Amy J. Lim, Clement Yong Hao Lau and Chi-Ying Cheng, *Applying the Dual Filial Piety Model in the United States: A Comparison of Filial Piety Between Asian Americans and Caucasian Americans*, Cultural Psychology Journal Frontiers, Vol. 12, (Feb. 2022), 4; see also Joanna Rozycka-Tran *et al*, 1.

[519] Bedford and Yeh, *Evolution of the Conceptualization of Filial Piety in the Global Context,* 1-14. Bedfored and Yeh notes that since the focus is on a universal psychological mechanism rather than cultural norms, values, and behavior, the DFPM may be applied for investigation of filial piety at individual, social, and cultural levels within and across various societies. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg. 2021.570547.

that it fits universal cultural contexts.[520] By highlighting behaviors such as mutual respect, empathy, and shared emotional needs, a cross-cultural framework may be created that is applicable in diverse contexts, thereby fostering a more inclusive comprehension and practice of filial piety, as well as positive parent-child dynamics.

In the majority of these studies, cross-cultural comparisons of the practice of filial piety have been made between Asian and Western populations and indicate that filial piety is more universal than culturally exclusive.[521] That is the motivations for expressing filial piety may have common elements that transcend cultural boundaries, indicating a more universal or widely applicable nature rather than being specific to any particular cultural context. For example, a study using the DFPM method by Lim *et al* examined the relationship between filial piety and the attitude toward caring for elderly parents in the Asian Context.[522] He indicated that Reciprocal Filial Piety (RFP), which entails a more balanced parent-child relationship where children are guided by gratitude and willingness to repay their parent's care and sacrifice to fulfill their parents' psychological and relational needs, does not differ across cultures while Authoritarian Filial Piety (AFP), which encompasses an asymmetric parent-child relationship where children are guided by obedience to satisfy the demands and expectations of their parents is unique to certain cultures.[523] The study also showed that collectivism or a group having priority over the individual, rather than ethnicity, predicted RFP and AFP and resulted in a positive attitude toward caring for the elderly parents.[524]

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[520] Sun *et al, Relations between Dual Filial Piety and Life Satisfaction,* 1.
[521] Ibid.
[522] Lim, Hao Lau and Cheng, *Applying the Dual Filial Piety Model in the United States,* 1.
[523] Lum *et al, Measuring Filial Piety in the 21st Century,* 3.
[524] Ibid.

In addition, DFPM has examined the relationship between life satisfaction and study satisfaction among students.[525] The results of these studies have predominantly shown more positive outcomes associated with Reciprocal Filial Piety (RFP) than Authoritarian Filial Piety AFP). Another study[526] has been demonstrated to investigate the influence of filial piety (REF and AFP) as an independent variable on study engagement and study satisfaction[527] in the more individualistic and egalitarian Polish culture versus the more collectivistic and hierarchical Vietnamese society.[528] They purposed to see the cultural similarities and differences in the psychological functions of REP and AFP as predictors of study engagement and study satisfaction. The result showed that in more individualistic cultures, the REP is a stronger predictor of study engagement and study satisfaction. However, the AFP is a better factor in predicting study engagement in more collectivistic cultures.[529] Thus, the implications for practice could concern reciprocity enhanced during the raising of children in a more individualistic culture.

Utilizing his filial motivation method, Kyu-Taik Sung[530] conducted a study that compared the type of filial motivation of Korean caregivers with that of American caregivers. The six types of filial motivations included: affection/love, repayment/reciprocity, filial responsibility/obligation, respect for parents, family harmony, and filial sacrifices. Motivation

[525] SUN *et al, Relations Between Dual Filial Piety and Life Satisfaction*, 1.

[526] Olwen Bedford, Kuang-Hui Yeh and Chee-Seng Tan, *Editorial: Filial Piety as a Universal Construct: From Cultural Norms to Psychological Motivations*, Frontiers in Psychology 13 (Augst 2022), 1.

[527] The expression, "study engagement and study satisfaction" refers to the overall attitude and approach of students toward participation in all aspects of learning, both at school and at home. This includes the level of involvement and satisfaction experienced by students in their academic endeavors.

[528] Tran *et al, The Implications of Filial Piety in Study Engagement and Study Satisfaction,* 3.

[529] Ibid., 7. They argue that RFP is driven by a horizontal relationship, assuming equal relationship between two individuals, even when they are parents and children. In comparison, AFP is determined by a vertical relationship, assuming a hierarchical relationship between different family roles such as parents and children.

[530] He has worked as a noteworthy social worker, gerontologist, and researcher for decades in both Korea and the United States and has written lots of books related to gerontology.

was measured by the adult children's willingness to care for their aged parents.[531] He noted cross-cultural equivalents.[532] For example, both American and Korean caregivers have cited affection/love, repayment/reciprocity, and obligation/responsibility as primary motivations for parent care. However, more Koreans cited these types of filial motivation as important than did the Americans. The children of Korean immigrants are influenced by the difficulties their parents face as immigrants which contributes to a combination of self-motivation and parental pressure to do well.[533]

In other areas of filial motivation, the two groups exhibited variations. Koreans recognized filial respect, family harmony, and filial sacrifice as significant motivations, whereas these were not identified among Americans,[534] perhaps because as Sung notes those three forms of motivations lend themselves more naturally to a collectivist culture and are undermined by the individualistic American cultural context.[535]

Sung conducted a similar study in 1998 in which he sought to determine what were deemed the most important acts of filial piety according to Korean adult children [536] Using content analysis and questionnaire survey methods, the study developed a descriptive classification of categories in the practice of filial piety. Showing respect was, by far, the most significant category, and some other categories were fulfilling filial responsibility, repaying debts to parents, harmonizing the family, making filial sacrifice, expressing love and affection,

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[531] Sung, *Cross-Cultural Comparison of Motivations for Parent Care*, 196. He has worked as a noteworthy social worker, gerontologist, and researcher for decades and has written lots of books related to gerontology in Korea.

[532] Ibid., 195.

[533] Yoo and Kim, *Remembering Sacrifices*,168.

[534] Ibid., 204.

[535] Ibid., 205.

[536] Kyu-Taik Sung, *An Exploration of Actions of Filial Piety*, Journal of Aging Studies, Vol. 12:4 (1998), 369-86. 386. In 1998, he had an exploratory study of identifying specific actions of filial piety after telling the filial stories with a set of 10 categories. Out of these, the result came out: 1) Showing respect, 2) fulfilling responsibility, 3) harmonizing family, 4) making repayment, 5) showing affection, and 6) making sacrifice. (379).

expressing filial sympathy, maintaining family continuity, compensating care, and showing respect for other elders.[537] In 2001, he initiated an exploratory study identifying various forms of elder respect among Asian countries based on similar empirical studies done by Asian scholars.[538] Sung determined that modern forms of elder respect are embedded in the ideals reflected in the classical teachings and that the influence of the traditional ideal form of elder respect persists.[539] In 2003, Sung identified a set of 14 forms of elder respect. Care respect, which includes affectionate care and instrumental services was the most frequently cited form by young adults in Korea.[540]

In this chapter, informed by Sung's studies regarding filial motivations and forms for the care of elderly parents, and DFPM, this survey will investigate the perception of Korean American adults in the Gerizim Hope Presbyterian (GHP) Church in regard to their understanding of what constitutes correct filial piety in the context of their immigrant society.

5.2 Method

Qualitative and quantitative methods were utilized to identify the motivation, perception and practice of filial piety in adult children of Korean immigrants within the faith community of the GHP church. Three age groups were surveyed in order to identify the various forms of filial

[537] Ibid. 379.

[538] Sung, *Elder Respect*, 18. He compared Japan, Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Philippines scholar with elder respect forms. The categories are care, victual, gift, linguistic, presentational, public, consulting, spatial, celebrative, acquiescent, salutatory, precedential, ancestor, and funeral respect.

[539] Ibid. 20. Sung notes that the less frequently cited forms are ancestor respect and funeral respect.

[540] Kyu-Taik Sung and Han Sung Kim, *Elder Respect among Young Adults: Exploration of Behavioral Forms in Korea*, Aging International, Vol. 28 (3) (Summer 2003), 279-94. 289. Sung notes that the form of care respect involves innermost feelings of care and concern, making elderly individuals feel happy and comfortable, relieving them of anxiety, not doing something which would hurt them, maintaining contact with them, spending time with them, providing personal care for them, and providing them with nourishment, housekeeping, and health services. Thus, he says that "care respect" involves affectionate care and instrumental services. The 14 forms of elder respect are categorized into: care respect, acquiescent respect, consulting respect, precedential respect, salutatory respect, linguistic respect, victual respect, gift respect, presentational respect, public respect, celebrative respect, spatial respect, funeral respect, and ancestral respect.

motivation that influenced the willingness of adult children to care for their aged parents, in particular, their preferences of RFP or AFP using DFPM methods. In addition, this survey assessed the participants' opinion of the significance of the church's role in instructing filial piety, in order to explore any connections between cultural values and religious beliefs in shaping the attitudes and behaviors of immigrant parents and their children concerning filial piety.

5.2.1 Participants

A total of 47 Korean-American adults[541] were selected from GHP, ranging in age from 20 to 59. They reside in the Atlanta GA area. Participants were categorized into three age groups: 20-39, 40-49, and 50-59. Individuals aged 40 to 59 were of particular interest as they were more likely to recognize and to some extent practice Confucian filial piety.[542] The second-generation was defined as those who were born in the U.S. to immigrant parents. The 1.5-generation was defined as those who were born in Korea and immigrated to the U.S. to immigrant parents between the ages of six to 12.[543] As such, the Korean American 1.5-generation were born and raised for a

[541] Among the 120 Korean church members, 47 individuals were recruited.

[542] When conducting a survey to explore the perceptions and practices of filial piety among different generations of immigrants in GHP Church, we consider that there may be some advantages to dividing groups by age rather than generation: Age groups may better reflect temporal changes. Certain age groups are more likely to have directly experienced societal and value changes during their specific periods. For example, individuals who belong to an older age group may have directly experienced and lived through significant historical events or societal changes that occurred in the past. Their perspectives and attitudes may have been shaped by the unique circumstances and cultural norms prevalent during their formative years. In contrast, younger age groups may have grown up in a different socio-cultural context, with exposure to distinct events and shifts in societal values. Therefore, analyzing responses and behaviors across age groups allows researcher to discern patterns and variations that align with specific temporal periods. In essence, different age groups serve as markers of different historical and cultural contexts, making them valuable categories for understanding how societal values have transformed over time. Also, categorizing by age allows for a more effective consideration of diversity within each age group. Particularly among immigrant generations, different age groups may have experienced the impact of immigration in varying ways, with a more nuanced understanding of filial piety perceptions and practices.

[543] Ruben G. Rumbaut, *Ages, Life Stages, and Generational Cohorts: Decomposing the Immigrant First and Second Generations in the United States*, International Migration Review, Vol. 38: 3 (Fall, 2004), 1160-205. 1167. Rumbaut notes that 1.5-generation usually learn to read and write in their mother tongue at schools in their home country but largely complete their education in the immigrant country.

short time in their native country, but have lived much of their lives exposed to their native language/culture as well as the language/culture of their new home.[544] Our sample also included a Korean/Indonesian woman, who immigrated from Indonesia, a nation whose culture is also shaped by Confucianism, and is living with her second Korean-American husband. Further data was collected during recorded interviews with four individuals.

5.2.2 Procedure

Prior to the survey, the respondents were made aware of its purpose, assured of data privacy, and informed that surveys and interviews would be used for research purposes only. We maintained participant anonymity and confidentiality throughout the data collection process and complied with the ethical guidelines prescribed by ETS. Participants read and signed the consent forms. Paper-based surveys and in-depth interviews were conducted at the church for two weeks. The paper-based survey questionnaires and consent forms were written in English, and supplementary explanations were provided in Korean by the researcher for those who had language barriers. Questionnaires included demographics such as age, gender, place of birth, length of residence in the U.S., their beliefs of individualistic and collectivistic values about filial piety, and their perception and attitude toward caring for elderly parents.

A total of 47 respondents completed paper-based survey questionnaires. The survey for the participants in the 20s-29 age group was completed in one session. The survey of the two remaining groups was conducted individually with the Korean translation added to the questionnaires. The survey took approximately 30 minutes. Additionally, in order to obtain in-depth and specific data regarding the perceptions of filial motivation, interviews were conducted

[544] Soojin Ahn, *1.5-Generation Korean American's Transnational Identity: Stories from Four College Students*, International Journal of Multicultural Education, Vol. 22:1 (2020), 16-34. 17.

in English with one person from each decade of life (20-50), for a total of four evaluations.[545] Consents were obtained, and the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Each interview lasted for approximately 15 minutes.

5.3 Findings

Out of the 47 participants, there were 17 males and 30 females. Ages ranged from 16 participants in the 20-29 age group, 5 between the ages of 30-39, 13 participants from 40-49, and 13 ranged from 50-59. The findings of the participants in the age groups of 20-29 and 30-39 were combined due to the small number in the former group. In addition, the responses of the 30-39 aged group (who were mostly in their early to mid-thirties) were much closer to that of the 20-29 year-olds (who tended to be in their mid to late twenties), than to the 40-49 aged group.

The average length of residence in the United States of all sampled was 19.9 years. Eighteen of the participants were first-generation immigrants. The total of the 1.5-generation sample was 25. The average length of the 1.5 generation's residence in the United States was approximately 17 years. There were three second-generation participants and one Korean/Indonesian. The number of female participants exceeded that of males. The majority of those surveyed consisted of 1.5-generation participants and consisted of 53.19% of the total (Table 1).

[545] Interviewees were selected by each age group as requested randomly by the researcher.

The majority (21 participants or 57.14%) of those in the 20 and 30 age groups belonged to the 1.5 generation. In the 40s (7) and 50s (10) age groups, there was a higher proportion of first-generation Korean immigrants. They were parents of 1.5 or second-generation children.

Table 1 Demographic Background of Participants

(N= 47)

Age	**Range: 20-59 years**
Place of Birth	Number of Participants
- **Korea**	43
- **The U.S.**	3
- **Indonesia**	1
Gender	
- **Female**	30
- **Male**	17
Length of Residence in the U.S.	Range: 3 – 41 years Mean: 19.83 years
Generation of Immigrants	
- **1**	18
- **1.5**	25
- **2.0**	3, 1 (Indonesian)

The participants were questioned in regard to their awareness of the concepts of biblical and Confucian filial piety, RFP and AFP within the context of individualism and collectivism, and their motivation for practicing filial piety as well as the various practices performed. Lastly, respondents were asked about the significant factors in their parent-child relationships. Tools for obtaining data included the Likert Scale[546] and specific, open-ended questions.

[546] A Likert scale is a commonly used psychometric tool or a type of rating scale that measures attitudes, opinions, or perceptions. This scale presents a statement or question and asks respondents to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on a scale of response options. The scale usually ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree, and the response options may include: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree.

5.3.1 Perception of the Concept of Filial Piety

During the survey and in-depth interviews, respondents were made aware of the concepts of biblical filial piety and Confucianism. Those participants in their 20s-29 age group did not have a clear understanding of Confucian filial piety and were unaware of any differences between Confucian filial piety and biblical filial piety. This differed significantly from the responses of the two older age groups, who indicated a better understanding of each type of filial piety.

Table 2 Perception of Biblical and Confucian Filial Piety

			Age
Questions	**20-39 (N=21)**	**40-49 (13)**	**50-59 (13)**
Familiar with the concept of Biblical Filial Piety	Very Familiar 7 (33.33%) Somewhat Familiar 11 (52. 38%)[547] Not Familiar 3 (14.29%)	Very familiar 10 (76.92%)[548] Somewhat Familiar 2 (15.38%) Not Familiar 1 (7.69%)	Very familiar 10 (76.92%) Somewhat Familiar 3 (23.08%) Not Familiar 0 (0.00%)
Understanding the Difference between Confucian and Biblical Filial Piety	Strongly Disagree 12 (57.14%) Disagree 6 (28.57%)	Strongly Disagree 4 (30.77%) Disagree 6 (46.15%)	Strongly Disagree 5 (38.46%) Disagree 7 (53.85%)

[547] Out of 21 participants in 20s, 11 individuals somewhat recognized the Biblical concept of filial piety, representing 52.38%.

[548] Out of the 13 participants in their 40s, 10 individuals are aware of the concept of Biblical filial piety, representing 76.92%.

	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
	3 (14.29%)	3 (23.08%)	1 (7.69%)
	Agree	Agree	Agree
	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree
	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)

In the 20-39 age group, 11 participants had some knowledge of biblical filial piety; 7 individuals claimed a good understanding and three were unfamiliar. In contrast, among the 40 and 50 age groups, 10 individuals had a good understanding, with two participants in the 40-49s and 3 in the 50-59 age groups reporting at least some knowledge, and one participant in the 40-49 group was unfamiliar.

When asked about the differences between Biblical filial piety and Confucian filial piety, 12 individuals (57.14%) in the 20-39 age group responded that they were unfamiliar with Confucian filial piety and as a result strongly disagreed with a comparison of the two.[549] Six participants responded that they disagreed, and three showed a neutral response. In the 40s and 50s age groups, six individuals (46.15%) and seven individuals (53.85%), respectively, answered that they knew the difference. Four in the 40s and five individuals in the 50s age groups responded that they were unaware. Three in the 40s age group and one in the 50s age group

[549] The statement "strongly disagreed with a comparison of the two" indicates that among the 12 individuals in the 20-39 age group who were unfamiliar with Confucian filial piety, their lack of knowledge led them to strongly disagree with attempt to compare Biblical filial piety with Confucian filial piety.

responded as neutral. This indicates that the further removed the generations are from the first-generation Korean immigrants, the less Confucian ideals are passed on or retained.

In response to the question regarding the role of the church in teaching and practicing filial piety, surprisingly, people in their 20s answered that the role of the church was important. This question was posed as an open-ended one: "*How do you think that the church plays a pivotal role in teaching or promoting the perception and practice of filial piety in the U.S?*" Not only those in their 20s, but the majority of participants responded that it was very important. One 56-year-old woman who works at a law firm responded in English in this way:

> The Bible teaches us to respect our parents, so it is the church's role to teach and encourage the young generation to practice filial piety not only towards their own parents but also towards pastors/evangelists and older individuals. While individualism is strongly emphasized in the U.S., churches, through their teachings and community-building efforts, can provide a counterbalance by emphasizing the significance of filial piety.[550]

The survey participants responded overwhelmingly that the church is a crucial institution in the United States for teaching and promoting the practice of honoring parents to the next generation.

5.3.2 Questionnaires of DFPM, Individualism and Collectivism

Using the DFPM framework, we hypothesized that RFP develops from positive interactions between parents and children, while AFP is guided by traditional Confucius filial piety where it is obligatory to respect and obey one's parents unconditionally. As such the responses that indicated a desire to repay filial piety based on love and gratitude rather than obligation or duty were inclined toward reciprocity. Nearly all respondents expressed their desire to gratefully give

[550] Our thanks to EunAh Kim for this quote. She recorded her name on the survey paper and gave permission for the use of her name.

back to their parents, agreeing (11) or strongly agreeing (34). Two individuals responded as neutral. Their desire to repay their parents for raising them was rooted in appreciation rather than obligation. This indicates the notion of being indebted. This mindfulness of the parental sacrifices incurred in the raising of their children results in willing, grateful care of their parents and ultimately reinforces the practice of filial piety.

It is interesting to note that when asked if they would decide not to marry someone their parents disliked, the 20-29 age group, raised in an American individualistic society expressed their willingness not to marry if their parents disapproved. Perhaps the Korean emphasis on harmonious family relationships along with respectful effective communication within the family plays a part in the answers to this question. It is much more likely that positive parent-child relationships will create an atmosphere where children are willing to accommodate their parents' wishes.

Table 3 Questionnaires of DFPM, Individualism and Collectivism

Questions	20-39 (N=21)	40-49 (13)	50-59 (13)
Gratitude to Parents as Motivation for Filial Piety	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree
	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
	1 (4.76%)	1 (7.69%)	0 (0.00%)
	Agree	Agree	Agree
	6 (28.57%)	2 (15.38%)	3 (23.08%)
	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree
	14 (66.67%)	10 (76.92%)	10 (76.92%)
Marriage and Parental Approval	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	0 (0.00%)	1 (7.69%)	0 (0.00%)
	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree
	1 (4.76%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
	6 (28.57%)	4 (30.77%)	4 (30.77%)
	Agree	Agree	Agree
	8 (38.10%)	4 (30.77%)	5 (38.46%)
	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree
	6 (28.57%)	4 (30.77%)	4 (30.77%)

My Life, My Choices: Individualism in Prioritizing My Decisions	Strongly Disagree 0 (0.00%) Disagree 8 (38.10%) Neutral 4 (19.05%) Agree 7 (33.33%) Strongly Agree 2 (9.52%)	Strongly Disagree 2 (15.38%) Disagree 3 (23.08%) Neutral 3 (23.08%) Agree 5 (38.46%) Strongly Agree 0 (0.00%)	Strongly Disagree 3 (23.08%) Disagree 5 (38.46%) Neutral 4 (30.77%) Agree 1 (7.69%) Strongly Agree 0 (0.00%)
Supporting Parents in Financial Hardship	Strongly Disagree 0 (0.00%) Disagree 0 (0.00%) Neutral 1 (4.76%) Agree 6 (28.57%) Strongly Agree 14 (66.67%)	Strongly Disagree 0 (0.00%) Disagree 0 (0.00%) Neutral 0 (0.00%) Agree 5 (38.46%) Strongly Agree 8 (61.54%)	Strongly Disagree 0 (0.00%) Disagree 0 (0.00%) Neutral 1 (7.69%) Agree 4 (30.77%) Strongly Agree 8 (61.54%)
Fulfilling Parents' Expectations	Strongly Disagree 0 (0.00%) Disagree	Strongly Disagree 0 (0.00%) Disagree	Strongly Disagree 0 (0.00%) Disagree

	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
	4 (19.05%)	1 (7.69%)	3 (23.08%)
	Agree	Agree	Agree
	11 (52.38%)	2 (15.38%)	9 (69.23%)
	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree
	6 (28.57%)	10 (76.92%)	1 (7.69%)

The question concerning financial support to parents when needed received similar responses from all age groups, with most of them strongly agreeing. Those influenced by Confucian filial piety, the 50-59 age group, scored the highest in response to the question concerning efforts to meet their parents' expectations. This suggests that older or first-generation Koreans, who were raised with Confucian values, tend to retain them.

5.3.3 Motivation and Forms of Filial Piety

Based on Kyu-Taik Sung's motivation for practicing filial piety and the forms of filial piety, modified questions were created. Respondents were asked to rank the importance of children practicing filial piety using numbers from 1 to 10 (1 being the least important and 10 the most). These questions surveyed traditional forms of filial piety, such as family harmony and the continuity of the family line, as well as obligatory repayment of sacrifices made by parents. They sought to examine traditional forms of filial piety in practice and to identify the most important form that adult children utilized when practicing filial piety. All age groups cited consideration of their parents' souls and compliance with religious teachings, especially Christianity, as primary

motivations for parent care, perhaps because this survey was conducted within a church setting, and filial piety aimed at the spiritual well-being of the parents aligning with biblical teachings.

While the importance of religious teachings was emphasized by respondents in the 20-39 and the 40-49 age groups, the 50-59 age group valued filial piety that revolved around care for their parents' souls. Perhaps, individuals in this group may be experiencing significant life transitions, such as their own children leaving home or even the loss of parents or other close relatives. These transitions may prompt individuals to reflect on the deeper aspects of life, considering the well-being of their parents' souls more profoundly. It may also reflect their longer exposure to the traditional authoritarian obligatory mindset.

The following chart demonstrates that the motivation and behaviors associated with filial piety, such as empathizing with parents' emotions, offering kindness, and using encouraging words, did not seem to be significant concerns for all age groups. Neglecting parents' emotions or showing no expression could potentially be considered emotional abuse from the perspective of the parents. The findings of NCEA's research[551] show that Korean elders experienced verbal or emotional abuse to some extent.[552] In fact, this was the predominant form of mistreatment reported among elderly Koreans in the United States. However, adult children may not interpret their lack of empathy and encouraging words as abusive. This highlights the importance of communication of expectations between the generations. The next table demonstrates the motivation and forms of filial piety.

[551] NCEA stands for National Center on Elder Abuse.

[552] Miya Chang, *Experience of Elder abuse among Older Korean Immigrants,* Journal of Elder Abuse & Neglect, Vol. 28 (2) 2016 :76-94 Doi: 10.1080/08946566.2016.1156593; also, Miya Chang, *Comparative Study on Subjective experience of Elder abuse Between Older Korean Immigrants in the United States and Older Koreans in Korea,* international Journal of Aging and Human Development, Vol. 88 (2) 2019 :187-210. Doi: 10.1177/0091415018759750

We have established that the first-generation Korean immigrants were greatly influenced by Confucianism in regard to their expectations for correct filial practices. Subsequent generations appear to be less aware of and therefore unmotivated by Confucian principles.

Table 4 Confucian Motivations and Forms of Filial Piety

	Age		
Questions	**20-39 (N=21)**	**40-49 (13)**	**50-59 (13)**
Providing financial care	0 (0.00%)	1 (7.69%)	1 (7.69%)
Caring for their physical health	3 (14.29%)	2 (15.38%)	1 (7.69%)
Kind and encouraging language	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Harmonizing the family	3 (14.29%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (7.69%)
Making filial sacrifice	1 (4.76%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Consideration of their souls	2 (9.52%)	0 (0.00%)	5 (38.46%)
Maintaining family continuity	1 (4.76%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Complying with religious teachings	5 (23.81%)	6 (46.15%)	4 (30.77%)
Obeying their instructions and advice	2 (9.52%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (7.69%)
Understanding their emotions	1 (4.76%)	2 (15.38%)	0 (0.00%)

No Response	3 (14.29%)	2 (15.38%)

Despite the fact that the 20-39 age groups, as noted in Table 2 have little if any understanding of Confucianism, they scored higher on many of the motivations and forms of expressing filial piety than the older groups including care for the physical health of the parents, harmonizing the family and maintaining family continuity. They also scored highly on complying with religious teachings and care of the soul. Since that group is virtually unfamiliar with those concepts as part of Confucianism, particularly ancestor worship as part of soul care, their answers may have been given in light of their biblical beliefs and knowledge. This is evident in their responses in Table 5.

Table 5 Biblical Motivations and Forms of Filial Piety

	Age		
Questions	**20-39 (N=21)**	**40-49 (13)**	**50-59 (13)**
Religious beliefs and scriptural teachings	8 (38.10%)	7 (53.85%)	9 (69.23%)
Cultural expectations and family values	2 (9.52%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Filial sense of responsibility/obligation for parents/elders	2 (9.52%)	2 (15.38%)	1 (7.69%)
Love/affection for parents or elders	5 (23.81%)	2 (15.38%)	2 (15.38%)
Repaying their sacrifice	2 (9.52%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (7.69%)

No Response	2 (9.52%)	2 (15.38%)

In addition, when asked about the significance of filial piety for our mental health and well-being, all respondents unanimously agreed that filial piety is closely related to mental health and overall well-being. A strong parent-child relationship contributes to an individual's overall life satisfaction. Feeling loved, supported, and connected to one's family, all biblically based principles, can lead to a mutual sense of happiness and well-being that is revealed in reciprocal rather than mandated care. Additionally, maintaining a harmonious relationship with parents tends to reduce stress and anxiety in the home. A supportive and respectful relationship with parents can serve as a source of emotional security and comfort.

When asked what was the most important factor in the parent-child relationship, the majority answered that love or communication was the most crucial. The 40-49 age group regarded "love/affection" as the most important element in the parent-child relationship while both the 20-30 and the 50-59 groups ranked "communication" as the second most important factor after love. This highlights the significance of a relationship rooted in love between parents and children. As Aquinas stated, "Love, especially Christian love is characterized by the selfless dedication to the well-being of another."[553]

5.4 In-Depth Interview with Four Adult Children

Four individuals were interviewed and agreed to provide their names, occupations, ages, and conversations in the transcribed excerpt. The participants included one individual from each of

[553] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1981), 1314.

the four age groups who took part in the written survey described above. The questions asked included:

1. "Could you describe your relationship with your parents and you? How did you view the parent-child relationship based on your answer (duty, love, trust/belief, communication, and material?)"
2. "The teachings of Confucianism on filial piety and those in the Bible are quite similar, except for ancestor worship in Confucianism. The practice of filial piety begins with understanding the parents' hearts in advance and considering their needs. In American culture, which emphasizes freedom, independence, and personal desire, what do you think about the perception of understanding one's parent's heart and if that affects the practice of filial piety?"
3. "As a Korean American, what do you think about the role of the church in teaching the perception and practice of filial piety, especially, for the next generation?"

The following sections contain the transcribed conversations of each participant's responses to the three questions.

5.4.1 David Lee, 26 Years Old, First Lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force Serving as Logistics Readiness Officer

> I came to the U.S. when I was 10 years old, and it has been 16 years. I would describe the relationship with my parents built upon the foundation of love. The reason I put love as the most important aspect of a parent-child relationship is because love establishes trust. I think that trust builds effective communication, thus leading to greater guidance and care.
>
> I have lived in the United States for a longer period than when I lived in Korea. I immigrated in the third grade. Initially, it was unfamiliar, but I adapted well to school life. I listened to the teachers well, greeted others warmly, and so I received recognition from my peers. In the 4th grade, I became a class

representative. I think the reason that I adjusted to school life pretty well was that from a young age, my parents taught me to be respectful to teachers and adults. I often received praise from teachers. For the individualism here, I don't see individualism negatively; while I believe in taking charge of my own life, I don't want to pursue the life I desire at the expense of disrupting family harmony. Autonomy is important, but not at the cost of breaking the peace within the family.

I believe the role of the church is very significant in teaching a moral life. Even though I am a 1.5-generation, I don't mind serving in the same church as my parents serve. As someone who uses both Korean and English, I see it as a significant advantage. While our church is mostly Korean, many of my friends use Korean at home and English at church or work. I consider it an advantage to learn and understand both American and Korean traditional cultures. I believe it is crucial for church leaders to effectively comprehend and teach the nuances of dual cultures.

5.4.2. Jabez Park, 39 years old, a President of Berit Theological Seminary and Visiting Pastor at GHP Church

In my relationship with me and my children, I chose love seen in 1 Corinthians 13. Love is the most important thing. But this agape love is very different from what most people, especially in the Western world think of love. The agape love is very much an overriding love. Even as we try to uphold standards of respect and filial piety, there will always be miscommunications, misunderstandings, and disagreements of one sort or another. Regardless of what may be misunderstood or miscommunicated, if you do have that love, from the principle of love itself, I think all of that extends.

I think as a Korean American, this is an interesting subject because Korean culture is very community-based, it is very family-oriented, and it operates more from an honor-shame system. From the American perspective, I also grew up in a very individualistic society and very objective in the sense that if it is wrong, then it's not good. But it calculates right and wrong differently from honor and shame. So, while it might not be wrong, for example, to not visit your parents, there is nothing wrong with it, but is that an honorable thing to do? From the Korean perspective, we can say that it's not honorable. So as a Korean American, how do you bring these two different perspectives together? I do not have an exact answer for all of that. But I think in terms of church and community, we try and have open communication to understand other people's perspectives and see which actions and which principles can be understood and mutually respected. And even if it requires people to step out of their cultural comforts, understanding that by doing so you could bring enhancement to the community, that is an important understanding to have as well.

Especially from the American perspective, if that part of filial piety involves teaching beyond my case, people might have a certain nature that may be favorable, but as it relates to not just cultural norms and standards, but especially biblical principles, if you are taught that and see how it properly applies to a certain situation or a worldview, you can still certainly engage in its proper practice depending on your situation. I think from the Korean-American perspective practice of such that teaching is really important and you know whether that teaching is emphasized in the family or in a church community for example the fact that it is taught I think ought to be very important for individuals.

5.4.3 Bo Young Lee, 48 Years Old, Coordinator International LL Global Inc.

I'm Korean American. First generation. I came to the States when I was 26 through marriage. It's been 23 years of living in the States. So, I think I'm confident in knowing both cultures.

I think communication is very significant in my relationship with my son. Love is invisible although we love each other. But without communication, we cannot build up the trust based on love.

Let me share my episode that my son told me when he was in 8th grade. I was shocked by his confession back then when he came home: "Mom, I can feel your love and daddy's. I know Dad is always busy, he is very quiet and not talkative, but I know he loves me. He does all this work for me, but I don't feel his love." My husband is a very quiet person and rarely expresses his feelings. Since then, I have encouraged my husband to communicate with my son frequently. So that's why I thought communication was very important. I see many Korean parents especially, they don't communicate with their children well. Because of this, children just guess, "Oh, my parents love me. They sacrificed all their life for me and my brother, my sister." However, sometimes they don't think they feel truly loved. For me, I'm very grateful to my mom. She showed me a very good example of how to communicate with each other, how to say sorry, how to say thank you, and how to be honest with each other, especially how to serve God.

American culture is individualistic. Independence is important. But how could I have been born without my parents? I have my own thoughts and freedom, but my parents have lived longer and experienced more than mine in life. That's why I believe filial piety means following their guidance and opinions and putting down my thoughts. They are wiser than me, I think.

The role of the church is essential. Because these days, everybody's focusing on individual life, especially, in American culture. People think the parents' lives and children's lives are separate and different. And I understand they respect each other. However, in the biblical view, family is a small church, and family is a

worship place as well. So home is the basic foundation of, I think, God's kingdom. So, the role of the church is essential, clearly teaching both the parents who don't know about this and their children how to respect and love each other in God.

5.4.4 John Lee, 59 Years Old, a Businessman

I have been living in the United States for 14 years. When I was in Korea, I learned about how to serve and respect my parents from them and school. And more and more, as I get older, I feel that I should take better care of my mother than when I was younger. My mother lives with my eldest brother's family in Korea now.

In my relationship with me and my children, belief, or trust is important. If I trust my children, and they trust me, then we can believe each other no matter the situation we may be in. I think I have a good relationship with my two sons. We talk on the phone every day and they tell me what they have done for the day. It is very good to talk and listen to their thoughts and works.

In the United States, I heard that there is a strong emphasis on individualism and seeking personal goals. However, it seems like South Korea is also gradually becoming more individualistic. It doesn't seem to be an issue of place. Regardless of where we live, whether in the U.S. or South Korea, I guess it's an era where there's little room for thinking about others more than myself. Moreover, people nowadays often prioritize loving themselves and money, just as the Bible says. In times like these, isn't it essential to adopt an attitude that considers others, including parents, rather than just focusing on "me"? Perhaps, this is where filial piety begins, I think. Our church must effectively teach respect to parents and to serve God to the next generation. This should be one of the central parts of the ministry of our pastors.

5.5 Summary of Survey and Individual Interviews

This survey explored how adult children in the GHP Church perceive and practice filial piety based on DFPM and filial motivations and practices in the immigrant context. In the survey findings, RFP was valued over AFP. However, there were some unexpected findings in the responses of the 20 and 30-year-old participants. Despite the fact that they grew up in the individualistic culture of the United States, they expressed a willingness to live a life that met their parents' expectations, even to the point of avoiding marriage to someone of whom their

parents disapproved (**Table 3**). In addition, after spending approximately seventeen of their formative years in the US, they were mindful of reciprocating the care and nurturing they had received from their parents. As such the Korean family-centered collectivist culture, where each family member in a loving reciprocal relationship, is able to uphold family values and prioritize family unity over individual goals or preferences to maintain harmony can flourish in an individualistic culture. The mutual family support system, reinforced in the context of the Korean church, serves to assist the younger generations to navigate the dissonance between the Korean and Western cultures. This was evidenced by the response of the 20-30 age group who would choose not to marry someone against their parent's wishes rather than risk the disruption of family harmony. The strong emphasis on collectivistic thinking has fostered a sense of unity and interconnectedness among Korean families and communities. That has created space for filial piety that includes families with strong parent-child communication and children who are willing to follow their parents' guidance and wishes with the freedom to explore their individuality in a culture that highly values individualism.

According to Sung's empirical study, filial motivations and forms influence the attitudes, practices, methods, and extent of the services and care that children extend toward their elderly parents.[554] Family harmony, filial sacrifices, and family continuity are motivations related to traditional Korean filial piety. Our survey was conducted within a church setting, with church members as participants who were likely to have some understanding of the practice of, but not necessarily their motivations for filial piety. Therefore, the researcher created modified questions in order to assess filial motivations and forms, specifically those that focused on the care of the soul of the parent based on Sung's framework.

[554] Ibid.

Caring for their parent's soul based on the biblical teachings was the most outstanding form of filial piety in our survey. Some respondents expressed the opinion that the provision of material and financial care for their parents is not true filial piety unless they ensure that their parents profess to be Christians. They emphasized the care of the soul and spirit aspect of filial piety over all others, perhaps because this perspective aligns with the evangelical biblical perspective of filial piety, as indicated by the responses of the 20-39 age groups who respect their parents in order to follow the teachings of the Bible. This aligns with Chong's assertion, who asserts that most 1.5 and second-generation Korean Americans tend to participate in church faithfully and religiously.[555] Sung also argues that parental care should consist not only of material support but also of reverence and spiritual consolation.[556]

It is interesting to note that the participants in the 20-39 age group tended to be motivated to express their filial piety by meeting their parent's expectations as a means of bringing harmony to the family. Herein lies a potential resolution of the conflict in an individualistic culture where the sole wishes of the parents must be prioritized even though different from those of their children. The goal of achieving familial harmony, common to both traditional and individualistic mindsets is possible through reciprocal loving relationships. The Korean church, through its biblical principles of filial piety, provides a strong basis for a satisfactory, reciprocal relationship between parents and children that fulfills the needs of each generation.

The importance of the church was agreed upon by the respondents across all age groups. This is consistent with the assertion of scholars that the immigrant church is an important community in which the 1.5-generation or second-generation may create new models of

[555] Chong, *What It Means to Be Christians,* 259-86.
[556] Sung, *Cross-Cultural Comparison of Motivations for Parent Care,* 202.

parenting, family life, and learning moral and ethical truth. [557] The church plays an important role for second-generation Korean Americans in instilling and reinforcing ethnic identity and culture. The principle and practice of filial piety should be an important part of the instruction to the next generation both at church and at home as it serves to foster strong family bonds and harmonious relationships between generations and promotes the moral and ethical development of responsibility for personal growth. A vital key to a successful generational transition and a thriving intergenerational church involves both nurturing personal growth and embracing the values of respecting elders along the spiritual journey of the second generation.

5.6 Summary

We have conducted the survey within the context of a church community and explored how adult children in the GHP Church perceive and practice filial piety based on the Dual Filial Piety Model (DFPM) and the filial piety motivations and forms. Those participants aged 40-59 had a better understanding of both biblical and Confucian filial piety, most likely due to the length of time they lived in Korea before immigrating. However, some individuals in their 20-39 age group demonstrated less understanding in differentiating between the two.

In the questionnaires on DFPM, Individualism, and Collectivism, reciprocal filial piety (RFP), driven by love and gratitude was valued more than authoritative filial piety (AFP) which is based on obligation/duty. The desire to repay filial piety was rooted in love and gratitude, rather than a sense of obligation in the parent-child relationship. Younger participants also expressed a willingness to meet their parents' expectations, displaying a strong emphasis on family harmony and parental approval. In answer to questions concerning motivation and forms

of filial piety, respondents of all age groups valued the importance of caring for their parents' souls, which aligns with Christian teachings and demonstrates the importance of a strong sense of spirituality. Although family harmony was important, the motivation of an obligation to repay the sacrifices of the parents was not a dominant factor. Love and communication were considered crucial factors in the parent-child relationship. These elements contribute to a harmonious parent-child relationship, life satisfaction, emotional security, and reduced stress.

All participants emphasized the significance of the church for teaching and promoting filial piety and faith growth. They reported a belief that the church has served as a crucial institution in the United States for teaching and promoting the practice of honoring parents and instilling cultural values, and personal faith growth in the next generation. As such, the church plays a critical role through the instilling and reinforcing of biblical filial piety values and contributing to strong family bonds and moral and ethical development.

The Korean-American community, particularly within the church context, places a strong emphasis on filial piety rooted in love, gratitude, and biblical teachings. The Korean immigrant church communities play a pivotal role in teaching and reinforcing filial piety through the lens of loving reciprocity and gratitude rather than a one-sided sense of duty. The enduring importance of family values and parent-child relationships in the Korean immigrant communities, as they maintain their ethnicity and at the same time seek to navigate and be successful in a new culture is invaluable. Here they may have space to adapt and thrive within the intergenerational dynamics of the church.

5.7 Limitations and Further Studies

The limitations of this survey include the small sample sizes and its relative lack of diversity which does not provide a comprehensive understanding of the broader population, particularly

the unchurched. People who attend the GHP church have common beliefs that could bias the results or lead to less candid responses. In addition, further studies that categorize the participants according to generation, rather than age could be informative. Findings from a single church may not be applicable to other churches or denominations. However, that is not to say that the values and practices that are so helpful within the church cannot be helpful to other Korean communities that find themselves in conflict between traditional and individualistic cultures. Mutual reciprocity is not confined to Christianity.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The multifaceted concept of honoring parents found in the Fifth Commandment transcends time, culture, and society. Its significance remains deeply embedded not only within the confines of biblical teaching but also within the very fabric of human relationships. Delving into biblical teachings and theological perspectives to examine the cultural nuances of filial piety in both Korean and American contexts speaks to the enduring relevance of this value. Not only does the honoring of one's parents profoundly impact individual moral development, but it also contributes greatly to the stability of societal ethics. The practice of filial piety continues to be a pivotal cornerstone for the building of a Christlike morality, fostering healthy reciprocal relationships, upholding ethical values in contemporary society, and providing a means of societal cohesiveness between generations past, present, and future.

Chapter One laid the foundation for our proposal concerning the timeless importance of the fifth commandment. The practice of filial piety, or the honoring of one's parents serves an important role in maintaining the fabric of society. The two Hebrew words used for honor in the OT create a strong connection to the idea that honor of God is closely tied to honor of parents.

In Chapter Two, we explored the theological interpretation of the biblical practice of filial piety and compared and contrasted it to those of the surrounding ANE nations. We also exegeted the two passages containing the Decalogue.

The fifth commandment is placed in the center of the Decalogue. Similar to a human backbone, this commandment performs a central role, forming the foundation between humanity's horizontal relationships and its vertical connection to the deity.

In Chapter Three, we discussed ancient filial piety practices throughout Korean history. Filial piety was an important part of every kingdom in Korea's history. It is part and parcel of Korean culture. This is evidenced by the ideology of *HongIk-Ingan* and its influence on the practice of filial piety or *Hyo*. Honoring parents was associated with honoring heaven.

Chapter Four considered the current perceptions and practices of Korean filial piety in the US especially in regard to the different generations. First-generation Koreans, with strong collectivist values, may struggle with the practice of filial piety in an individualistic society. Later generations may understand filial piety practices differently and not express them in traditional ways that are acceptable to their parents. Finally, we explored the implications for the church in promoting filial piety.

Chapter Five consisted of the results, of our survey of participants from the GHP church regarding filial piety perceptions and practices. The survey findings highlighted nurturing filial piety through love, gratitude, and adherence to biblical teachings. The faith community has played a crucial role in instilling and reinforcing filial piety, emphasizing a perspective of mutual love and gratitude, rather than a mere sense of duty. The church has served as a cornerstone in nurturing and fortifying the values of biblical filial piety, thus fostering robust family connections and ethical growth.

Before starting this study, we asked the following questions: Why is biblical filial piety still important today? How can we properly practice honoring parents in a biblical way? How can the church help Korean-American adult children recapture the importance of parental honor while striving to live as believers straddling two cultures? We have concluded that the practice of filial piety in the home contributes to strengthen social relationships throughout life. It is also evident that healthy communication between the generations concerning what filial piety means

and how it should be practiced is vital. Finally, the Korean church, with its strong sense of community and loving Christlike values may be the most important vehicle for fostering the practice of filial piety.

6.1 Contributions of the Study

Our study explored the ancient principles and practices of filial piety outlined in the Bible and the way in which they may be applied in contemporary settings. The practices of filial piety in Israel, the ANE, and traditional Korean culture share many commonalities and timeless principles that may be incorporated into the practice of filial piety by the Korean American culture in the U.S. This cross-cultural study may enrich the understanding of filial piety by highlighting both commonalities and distinctions and demonstrating its adaptability and universality in several ways.

First, this understanding and integration of Israelite, other ANE cultures, and ancient Korean traditions provide a comprehensive view of filial piety, acknowledging its multifaceted nature. The biblical and Korean concepts of filial piety were similar in that both practices went beyond mere moral obligation. They also played a crucial role in fostering familial harmony, upholding respect for authority, and reflecting the divine nature of God. Recognizing and obeying parental authority reflected an individual's obedience to God's Command. The Bible portrays God as a loving Father, and human parents serve as intermediaries of this divine love. Thus, honoring one's parents overflows from the honoring of God and acknowledgment of His love and care. At its core, biblical filial piety mirrored the nature of God, serving as a reflection of Him as the ultimate father, deserving of honor and obedience in love. As such, through the exploration of biblical filial piety, we emphasize its enduring significance. The Fifth

Commandment is presented not as a relic of the past but as a timeless principle with moral, ethical, and spiritual implications that resonate across generations and cultural landscapes.

In addition, the fact that traditional Korean filial piety, which is rooted in Confucianism, shares similarities with biblical filial piety, except for the ancestor veneration in Korean tradition, illustrates the innate cross-cultural nature of filial piety and how its practices over time. Traditional filial piety in Korea emphasized honoring heaven and as such extended beyond parents' graves and involved care for both the living and the deceased. Ancient Korean culture was rooted in the principle of *HongIk-InGan* and filial piety served as its cornerstone. Throughout the rise and fall of different states in Korean history, filial piety remained intertwined with the religious beliefs of each era, guiding and encouraging the reverence of parents among the people. While ancient Korea embraced filial piety as a national ideology, the introduction of Christianity challenged traditional practices, leading to clashes, particularly concerning ancestral worship. The identification of clashes between Confucian-based traditions and Christian beliefs highlights the dynamic nature of cultural practices. The Korean culture continues to observe the spirit of filial piety passed down from its ancestors and is ingrained in the Korean people today. The idea of honoring parents influenced by Confucius in ancient Korea has now become rooted in biblical principles in the Korean immigrant population in the U.S.

Moreover, by examining the experiences of Korean immigrants in the United States, our study sheds light on the impact of cultural shifts in the practice of filial piety. The contrast between individualistic American culture and traditional Korean collectivism, particularly among the 1.5 and second generation, underscores the challenges and opportunities for maintaining filial values in a new cultural context. Despite the struggle between the younger generation's individualism and the Confucian values of their immigrant parents, the role of the Korean

community, especially the church, serves to facilitate the practice of filial piety within an individualistic context. Our study underscores the pivotal role of faith communities, particularly churches, in transmitting filial values across generations. The recognition of the church as a crucial institution for passing down faith and cultural values suggests implications for faith communities in supporting the practice of filial piety among their members and potentially beyond, for it is within the church that the inherent communal values found in traditional Korean society can be expressed in filial piety practices by immigrants in the individualistic Western culture.

This was exemplified by our survey of various age group attenders of the GHP church concerning the perceptions and practices of young Korean Americans regarding filial piety. The findings of the survey and individual interviews of these Korean Americans add empirical depth to our study by providing insights into how the younger generation perceives and practices filial piety in a multicultural setting. Reciprocal Filial Piety (RFP) is a prevalent motivation for practicing filial piety. Here the younger generation is pre-disposed to practice filial piety out of gratitude for their parent's love and sacrifice for them in a loving family setting rather than, as in traditional Koran culture and its Confucian motivation, because they are authoritatively told that they must. While individuals aged 40-59 exhibited a more profound comprehension of both biblical and Confucian filial piety than their counterparts in the 20-39 age group, respondents of all age groups expressed a shared appreciation for the significance of caring for their parents' souls. This shared value aligns with Christian teachings, underscoring the enduring importance of a strong sense of spirituality. It is in the community of the church, a place where timeless biblical teachings are imparted in the ever-changing world, that filial piety may be learned, practiced, and perpetuated in a way acceptable to all generations of Korean immigrants.

Our study addressed the contemporary relevance of filial piety, emphasizing its role as a moral compass, a stabilizing force in relationships, and a cultural continuity tool in the face of changing family dynamics. The Bible emphasizes the importance of respecting and obeying parents (Eph. 6:1-3). Obedience and respect are fundamental expressions of honoring parents, as is taking care of parents, especially in their old age (1 Timothy 5:4). Filial piety also should be offered with love and gratitude. Expressing love and gratitude for the sacrifices and care provided by parents is a biblical way to honor them (Col. 3:20). It involves seeking and valuing parental wisdom (Prov. 1:8-9). Moreover, engaging in prayer for parents is a powerful way to honor them as well. Praying for their well-being, wisdom, and spiritual growth demonstrates a commitment to their flourishing.

In essence, our study contributes a comprehensive understanding of filial piety, offering insights that span biblical, cultural, historical, and contemporary dimensions.

6.2 Further Areas of Study

Further areas of study concerning familial piety should include that of correct filial piety in a family where the child has been abused. Is it possible for, or should an abused child be expected to respect their parents in the same way as those raised in a loving environment? How can they develop the skills for honoring parents? Should parents who have abused their children expect filial piety? Another area of study may include a better understanding and recovering of filial piety by children who have either chosen to neglect their parents or have inadvertently abused them. Research dealing with the potential benefits and challenges associated with the integration of filial piety into the lives of abused parents would provide valuable insights into interventions and support toward restoring broken parent-child relationships. Further study is needed in the

area of children who do not have living parents and ways they may practice filial piety to elders within their community.

The development of the parent-child relationship is foundational, for it serves as a model for future relationships. As such, childrearing practices are crucial and effective if parents set an example by demonstrating reciprocal filial conduct. Transparent and open communication between parents and children is essential for cultivating filial piety. Discussing family values, sharing personal experiences, and engaging in meaningful conversations about the importance of honoring elders contribute to a deeper understanding of filial obligations.

In addition, an investigation into the practice of filial piety within the context of a low birth rate and an increasing aging population is increasingly relevant. Parents are living longer and have fewer children to help bear the burden of their care, while their children are working full time and raising children of their own.

We have argued that the practice of proper filial piety overflows from one's relationship to God the Father to our earthly parents. Another approach that warrants further study is that of how the practice of filial piety toward parents contributes to and influences one's relationship and attitude toward God. This would entail a study of God as father.

A final area of study concerns the utilization of technology in sustaining familial connections and care. Understanding how technology facilitates communication, emotional support, and caregiving across geographical distances would be helpful, especially education for the elderly who may balk at the use of technology. Studies in these areas have the potential to unravel the intricate dynamics of intergenerational bonds in the face of abuse or misunderstanding of filial piety, demographic challenges, and technological advances by offering

insights that can inform policies, interventions, and societal attitudes toward aging and family responsibilities in our increasingly interconnected world.

6.3 Implications for the Church

The motivation behind initiating this project stemmed from my regret over not properly practicing filial piety toward my own parents. Despite being a Christian, I realized that I lacked a clear understanding of what filial piety truly meant and how to put it into practice. Reflecting on my mistakes by not treating my parents with the love and devotion they deserved, even though I received their sacrifices and care as a child, led to a repentant and reflective attitude, prompting the commencement of this work.

I would be delighted if this study could be helpful to the next generation in overcoming my own past failures in filial piety. With a heart and attitude of repentance toward my past shortcomings as a child to my parents, I embarked on this research. If this study influences my two sons and the future generations to honor and love their parents, I would be greatly happy. In that sense, I am now very grateful and pleased. In Korean idioms, there are phrases like '*BanMyun GyoSa* (반면교사 反面教師)' and '*TaSan JiSeok* (타산지석 他山之石).' These expressions refer to learning from others' mistakes and actions, realizing, 'I should not behave like that person or thing,' and developing it in a way that benefits those who observe it. In this age where it's difficult to find practical wisdom, I hope this paper could serve as '*BanMyun GyoSa*' or '*TaSan JiSeok*' for the younger generation, helping them to find guidance and inspiration.

This study explored the expressions of filial piety in ancient Israel, the traditional practices of filial piety among Koreans, and contemporary manifestations of filial piety in modern life, and considers how the next generation can practice filial piety. It underscores the

need for proper guidance concerning filial piety, especially within the family and the church. We have seen the significance of the role of the church, in imparting timeless biblical truths in a world characterized by constant change. We recognized the importance of teaching and modeling filial piety for future generations.

The prevalence of Reciprocal Filial Piety (RFP) as a motivation among young Korean Americans suggests that the church is a place that endorses the expression of filial piety based on gratitude and love rather than authoritarian duty. Jesus exemplified a profound commitment to divine authority and a sacrificial love that extends to all who embrace Him as Lord. These Christian values of love and reciprocity then become the foundation of filial piety. Implementing educational initiatives within the church can enhance awareness and understanding of different cultural approaches to filial piety and how they intersect with the biblical model thereby fostering empathy and unity among the congregation. Church leaders have the opportunity to provide pastoral guidance by integrating biblical teachings concerning honoring parents with an understanding of cultural nuances and thus offer support and wisdom for diverse familial contexts.

Church based family ministries concerned with the cultural dynamics of filial piety may offer support for families struggling with the understanding and implementation of its practice in a mutually satisfactory way between the generations.

First, the church should provide emotional support that encourages an environment of empathy and understanding within the congregation to address their inner needs. Programs, support groups, or counseling services can help individuals navigate their emotional relationships with their parents. Classes regarding facilitation of effective communication between parents and children can be provided to assist in fostering mutual understanding.

A second area of support lies in physical assistance. Organizing initiatives or volunteer groups to assist the elderly, not just within the church but also in the wider community increases the awareness of the plight of the elderly and serves as a Christ-like model of ministry that overflows into filial piety. This might include home visits, meal provisions, or transportation for seniors.

Mental and spiritual guidance through counseling classes, workshops, or sermons that discuss the importance of filial piety from a biblical perspective may offer forums where issues are addressed in a safe place and offer opportunities for exploring scriptural teachings on honoring parents and providing guidance on how these teachings can be applied in daily life. Corporate prayers for families struggling with aspects of filial piety are a powerful tool that the church can provide. The importance of speaking to God in the church setting about the struggles that come with diverse cultural backgrounds and emphasizing in community the desire for spiritual growth within the context of filial relationships must not be underestimated.

The church may offer financial support through the establishment of church community funds or support networks to aid families in financial distress, particularly those struggling to care for elderly parents. This can include advice on budgeting, assistance programs, or direct financial aid.

Finally, by providing interpersonal support that facilitates healthy family relationships and assistance in resolving conflicts within families, the church may provide guidance regarding communication strategies, conflict resolution, and forgiveness in order to maintain or repair broken respectful parent-child relationships. Thus, understanding and embracing the diverse cultural expressions of filial piety within the church can contribute to a more inclusive, supportive, and spiritually enriching community for its members.

The church is a lighthouse in this world offering a beacon of hope in a multicultural world. As lifestyles and thoughts evolve over time, the unchanging words of God's truth serves as a light, illuminating the way. It remains an unwavering standard, guiding people to live life well. As the world changes around us, the church is entrusted with the responsibility of being a source of divine guidance, providing illumination through the eternal truths embedded in the Scriptures. The continued importance of biblical filial piety today can be attributed to its role as a moral foundation, a reflection of divine order, and a timeless guide for fostering harmonious relationships in an ever-changing world.

In contemplating the enduring importance of biblical filial piety in contemporary society, our exploration has unearthed profound insights into the timeless significance of the Fifth Commandment. Despite the shifting landscapes of culture, society, and individualism, the relevance of honoring parents, as articulated in the Bible, remains pivotal. At the heart of this enduring commandment lies a moral compass that not only transcends time and cultural differences but also plays a crucial role in shaping the very fabric of human relationships. Biblical filial piety, encapsulated in the commandment to honor one's father and mother, extends beyond a mere moral duty. It serves as a foundational value with far-reaching implications for individual moral development and societal ethics. From a theological perspective, the practice of filial piety is deeply intertwined with the divine order, reflecting the nature of God as the ultimate father worthy of honor and obedience. The commandment operates as a guiding principle, fostering relationships and upholding ethical values that resonate across generations.

In closing, Arnold Toynbee's words resonate: "I earnestly hope that Korean filial piety will extend its influence not only within Korea but also to the Western world. In the 21st century, Northeast Asia would emerge as a prominent center of the world, with Korea's *HongIk-InGan*."

Our prayerful hope is that the spirit of Korean filial piety based on *HongIk-Ingan* which means, "benefiting all humanity," would affect human relationships globally. At the same time, let our pursuit of biblical filial piety not be confined to academic discourse but emerge as a lived reality that exhibits the enduring impact of divine principles on the fabric of our relationships.

May our lives echo the timeless wisdom of Exodus 20:12, "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you." May our actions, guided by the teachings of Scripture, radiate a spirit of honor, gratitude, and unwavering commitment, reflecting the eternal truths embedded in the sacred teachings.

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